1

Africa



Abidjan – Economic

Africa

An Encyclopedia for Students

GEOPOLITICAL



Africa

An Encyclopedia for Students

John Middleton, Editor

Volume 1

Abidjan–Economic



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Preface

Understanding areas outside our own corner of the globe is always a challenge. This is particularly true in the case of Africa, a vast continent with a complex web of indigenous cultures. Yet Africans make up one-fifth of the world's population, and the continent lies at the crossroads between the Americas, Europe, and the Middle East. What happens in Africa affects us all.

Moreover, North America's links to Africa go back many centuries—first as a partner in the Atlantic slave trade and later as an ally of European colonial powers that ruled Africa. The slave trade had a lasting effect on the history of both North America and Africa. It brought millions of Africans to this side of the Atlantic as slaves, forming the basis for black populations in the Americas. At the same time, the slave trade divided Africa and deprived it of generations of young people who would have played a productive role in society.

A great deal of material about Africa—in textbooks, newspapers, novels, and films—is superficial, biased, or even invented. Most of it appears in bits and pieces and not as part of a comprehensive study of the region. This work, *Africa: An Encyclopedia for Students,* offers a more coherent picture of the continent. In its pages Africa emerges as a single continent with unique geographical features, a continuous, interrelated history, and similar economic, political, and social problems.

The Scope of the Encyclopedia. In its four volumes, *Africa: An Encyclopedia for Students* offers both a broad and a fairly detailed view of Africa's land and its peoples—from the Mediterranean Sea to the Cape of Good Hope and from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean. Although it is not possible to provide a detailed treatment of all aspects of the continent in less than 1,000 pages, the work does bring together a great deal of vital information and careful analysis.

The student encyclopedia is based on the four-volume *Encyclopedia of Africa South of the Sahara,* published in 1997, of which I was editor in chief. The original work contains 896 articles by geographers, historians, anthropologists, linguists, philosophers, and other experts from Europe, North America, and Africa. In the past most scholarly research about the continent came from non-Africans. Now, however, scholars from Africa play a leading role in the field. Africans tend to see their continent in one way, while foreigners have other perspectives. Combining these different images of Africa brings us closer to an understanding of the continent.

Africa: An Encyclopedia for Students covers much of the same ground as the earlier work at a level suitable for middle and high school students. Many of the original articles have been adapted and updated, and a substantial amount of new material has been added on North Africa. In addition to articles on standard topics such as countries, cities, and historical individuals, the student encyclopedia contains entries on broad fields of knowledge, ranging from human origins to music and song, from colonialism to marriage systems, and from slavery to food and drink. All articles are arranged in alphabetical order to make it easy for students to find information.

Features of the Encyclopedia. Alongside the text column in the pages of *Africa: An Encyclopedia for Students* is a marginal column filled with helpful features. There readers will find time lines placing events in historical context, sidebars providing interesting information on a variety of topics, and definitions of difficult or unfamiliar words used in the text. Cross-references to related articles appear both within the text and at the end of entries. Fact sheets accompany each country article, providing significant data about the nation's people, geography, government, and economy in a convenient format.

The illustrations in the student encyclopedia bring the people and places discussed in the entries to life. Each volume has special full-color inserts

devoted to the themes of Peoples and Cultures, The Land and Its History, Art and Architecture, and Daily Life. The encyclopedia also includes more than 50 maps of modern nations, ancient kingdoms and colonial empires, trade routes, and various geographic features.

The original *Encyclopedia of Africa South of the Sahara* took six years to produce and *Africa: An Encyclopedia for Students* has taken nearly two more. No single editor can do everything, and I wish to thank the publisher, Karen Day, and the senior editor, John Fitzpatrick, of Charles Scribner's Sons; Darryl Kestler of Visual Education Corporation; and the many members of their staffs. In addition, I thank the authors and the members of the original boards of associate editors, advisers, and consultants. This new student encyclopedia has been very much a cooperative effort.

John Middleton, Editor

A Time Line of Africa

4 m.y.a.*	Australopithecines *(early hominids) live in northern Rift Valley (Ethiopia, Kenya).*
2.5 m.y.a.*	*Early Stone Age;* Homo habilis *appears (Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania).*
1.5 m.y.a.*–150,000 B.C.	Homo erectus *appears.*
240,000–40,000 B.C.	*Middle Stone Age.*
80,000–20,000 B.C.	*Late Stone Age.*
20,000–10,000 B.C.	*Farming introduced in lower Nile Valley.*
10,000–6000 B.C.	*Cattle domesticated in northern Africa.*
	Millet and sorghum grown in western Africa.
6000–5000 B.C.	*Khoisan hunters of southern Africa create rock paintings.*
3000 B.C.	*King Menes unifies Lower Egypt and Upper Egypt.*
	Agriculture develops in Ethiopian highlands.
2000–1000 B.C.	*Horses introduced in Sahara region.*
	Bananas grown in central Africa.
332 B.C.	*Greeks occupy Egypt.*
200 B.C.	*Romans gain control of Carthage.*
32 B.C.	*Royal city of Meroë flourishes in what is now Sudan.*
A.D. 300s	*Aksum invades Meroë; Aksum king adopts Coptic Christianity.*
530s	*Byzantine empire takes Mediterranean ports.*
600s	*Muslim Arabs invade North Africa.*
ca. 1000	*Shona begin building Great Zimbabwe.*
1200s	*Portuguese voyage to northwest coast of Africa.*
	Sundjata Keïta founds Mali kingdom.

**m.y.a. million years ago*

1312–1337	*Mansa Musa rules Mali and makes pilgrimage to Mecca.*
1400s	*Benin kingdom flourishes.*
1498	*Vasco da Gama sails around the southern and eastern coasts of Africa on the way to India.*
1505–1510	*Portuguese seize Swahili towns in eastern Africa and fortify Mozambique.*
	Kongo king Afonso I converts to Christianity.
1517	*Ottoman Turks conquer Egypt and port towns along the Mediterranean.*
1578	*Moroccans defeat Portuguese, remaining free of colonial control.*
1591	*Al-Mansur invades Songhai.*
1600s	*French, English, and Dutch establish trading posts along western coasts to export gold, ivory, and slaves.*
	Akan state emerges.
1650s	*Dutch settle at Cape of Good Hope in southern Africa.*
	Arab traders settle on East African coast.
1700s	*French and British establish network for slave trade in Central Africa.*
	Zanzibar prospers as Arab trading center.
1721	*French colonize Mauritius.*
1787	*British missionaries found Sierra Leone.*
1795	*British seize Cape Colony from Dutch.*
1798	*Napoleon leads French invasion of Egypt.*
1805	*Muhammad Ali takes power in Egypt, breaking free of Ottoman control.*
1807	*Britain and the United States abolish slave trade.*
1817	*Shaka emerges at head of Zulu kingdom in southern Africa.*
1821	*Freed slaves from the United States settle in what is now Liberia.*
1828	*Queen Ranavalona takes throne in Madagascar.*
1830s	*French rule proclaimed in Algeria.*
	Slave trade continues in western Africa.
1835	*Dutch settlers in southern Africa head north in "Great Trek."*
1840s–1880s	*Slave trade flourishes in East Africa.*
1847	*Republic of Liberia is established.*
1852–1873	*David Livingstone explores Central and East Africa.*
1858	*Portuguese abolish slavery in Central Africa.*

1855–1868	*Emperor Téwodros rules Ethiopia.*
1859–1869	*Suez Canal is built.*
1869	*Diamonds are discovered at Kimberley in northern Cape Colony.*
1880–1881	*Afrikaners rebel against Britain in the First Anglo-Boer War, and British withdraw from Transvaal in southern Africa.*
1885	*Mahdist forces capture Khartoum.*
1880s–early 1900s	*European powers colonize most of Africa (present-day names of countries listed):*
	Belgians in Congo (Kinshasa);
	British in Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Uganda, Kenya, Somalia, Mauritius, Seychelles, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland;
	French in Mauritania, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Senegal, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Bénin, Central African Republic, Gabon, Congo (Brazzaville), Chad, Djibouti, Madagascar, Réunion, and the Comoro Islands;
	Germans in Togo, Cameroon, Namibia, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi;
	Portuguese in Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe, Cape Verde, Angola, and Mozambique;
	Spanish in Western Sahara and Equatorial Guinea.
1893–1895	*Africans in King Leopold's Congo revolt.*
1895	*France forms federation of colonies that becomes French West Africa.*
1896	*Ethiopian emperor Menilek defeats Italians, maintaining country's independence.*
1899–1902	*Afrikaners defeated by British in Second Anglo-Boer war.*
1910	*Union of South Africa formed.*
1914–1918	*World War I: French and British capture German Togo; Africans fight on the side of various colonial powers in Africa.*
1922	*Egypt gains its independence.*
1930	*Haile Selassie I crowned emperor of Ethiopia.*
1935	*Italians invade Ethiopia.*
1936	*Union party in South Africa revokes voting rights of blacks.*
1939–1945	*World War II: many major battles fought in North Africa; Africans in French and British colonies drafted to fight in Europe and Asia.*
1940s	*First nationalist political parties are formed in western Africa.*

1944	*William Tubman becomes president of Liberia.*
1945	*Arab League, an organization of Arab states, is founded in Cairo.*
	Ethiopia regains its independence.
1948	*Policy of apartheid introduced in South Africa.*
1950s	*Several independence movements against colonial rule develop.*
1951	*Libya declared an independent monarchy under King Idris I.*
1952	*Gamal Abdel Nasser seizes power in Egypt.*
1953	*Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), and Nyasaland (Malawi) join to form the Central African Federation.*
1954	*War breaks out in Algeria.*
1956	*Sudan, Morocco, and Tunisia become independent.*
1957	*Ghana achieves independence, with Kwame Nkrumah as president.*
1958	*Guinea, under Sékou Touré, becomes independent.*
1960	*Independence achieved in Cameroon (French Cameroun), Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Kinshasa), Dahomey (Bénin), Gabon, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Togo, and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso).*
1961	*Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and Tanganyika become independent.*
1962	*Independence achieved in Algeria, Burundi, and Uganda.*
1963	*Kenya (under Jomo Kenyatta) and Zanzibar become independent.*
	Central African Federation ends.
	Organization of African Unity is founded.
	FRELIMO begins armed struggle for liberation of Mozambique.
1964	*In South Africa, Nelson Mandela stands trial and is jailed.*
	Tanganyika and Zanzibar join to form Tanzania.
	Malawi and Zambia become independent.
	Hutu overthrow Tutsi rule in Burundi.
1965	*Rhodesia declares independence under Ian Smith.*
	Mobutu Sese Seko takes power in Congo (Kinshasa) and renames it Zaire.
	King Hassan restores monarchy in Morocco.
	The Gambia gains independence.
1966	*Independence achieved in Lesotho and Botswana.*

1967–1970	*Biafra attempts to secede from Nigeria.*
1968	*Swaziland becomes independent.*
1969	*Muammar al-Qaddafi seizes power in Libya.*
1970	*Egypt/Sudan: Aswan Dam is completed.*
1974	*Guinea attains independence.*
1975	*Cape Verde and Angola become independent.*
	FRELIMO government gains independence in Mozambique.
1976	*Spain withdraws from Western Sahara; Morocco and Mauritania fight over territory.*
	Residents of Soweto and other South African townships begin violent protests.
1970s–1990s	*War erupts across the continent within the countries of Angola, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Kinshasa), Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, and Western Sahara, and between the nations of Ethiopia and Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia, and Sudan and Uganda.*
1980	*Zimbabwe becomes independent.*
1990	*Nelson Mandela released from prison.*
	Namibia becomes independent.
1993	*Apartheid ends in South Africa.*
	Eritrea gains independence from Ethiopia.
1994	*Rwandan and Burundi presidents assassinated; ethnic violence between Hutu and Tutsi continues.*
	Nelson Mandela becomes first black president of South Africa.
1995	*Outbreak of deadly Ebola virus in Congo (Kinshasa).*
1997	*Laurent Kabila takes power in Zaire and renames it Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa).*
1999	*Libya hands over two suspects in 1986 airplane bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland.*
2000	*Ghana chooses president John Kufuor in free elections.*
	Paul Kagame is the first Tutsi to become president in Rwanda.
2001	*Congo (Kinshasa) leader, Kabila, is assassinated; Kabila's son, Joseph, succeeds him as president.*

Abidjan

With a population of about 2.8 million, Abidjan is the capital of IVORY COAST and one of the most important ports in French-speaking Africa. Situated along the edge of the Ebrié Lagoon on the Gulf of Guinea, its ocean port handles cargo for Ivory Coast, BURKINA FASO, MALI, and NIGER. Principal exports are cocoa, coffee, timber, and petroleum. Abidjan is also a banking center for West Africa.

The Krou and the Akan make up the two major ethnic groups living in Abidjan. The city's numerous educational institutions include the national university, archives, museum, and library. There is a research center for coffee and cocoa in addition to schools for marine science, communications, and administration.

Abidjan is clearly divided into modern and underdeveloped areas. The Hotel Ivoire, a tourist resort equipped with an ice rink, bowling alley, cinema complex, and casino, is one of the city's main attractions. Another landmark is the Italian-designed St. Paul's Cathedral, one of the most elaborate churches in Africa. The city is linked to other Ivory Coast cities by highway and to Burkina Faso by rail. (*See also* **Tourism, Transportation**.)

ABYSSINIA

See *Eritrea; Ethiopia.*

Accra

Accra, the capital of GHANA, lies on the Gulf of Guinea on the Gold Coast in West Africa. It is the commercial, educational, governmental, and cultural center of Ghana, the hub of the country's road and rail system, and the site of the Kotoka International Airport. The population is over 1.6 million.

The Portuguese, the first Europeans to visit the region, arrived in the early 1500s. They were followed in the 1600s by the Dutch and the British, who built two forts used in the SLAVE TRADE. The forts later grew into the city of Accra. Under the British, the city was the capital of the Gold Coast, which became Ghana in 1957. Present-day Accra is sharply divided into modern sectors and shantytowns*.

* **shantytown** poor, run-down section of a city, often inhabited by immigrants

Industries in Accra include brewing and distilling, fish and fruit canning, clothing, shoes, and pharmaceutical products. The city has an ocean port, but Tema, to the east, surpasses it in importance. Accra is home to the University of Ghana as well as schools for communications, science, and technology. The national museum and archives and the National Theater are all located in the city. In addition, live music performances, movie theaters, and facilities for visitors have contributed to a growing tourist industry in Accra. (*See also* **Tourism**.)

Achebe, Chinua

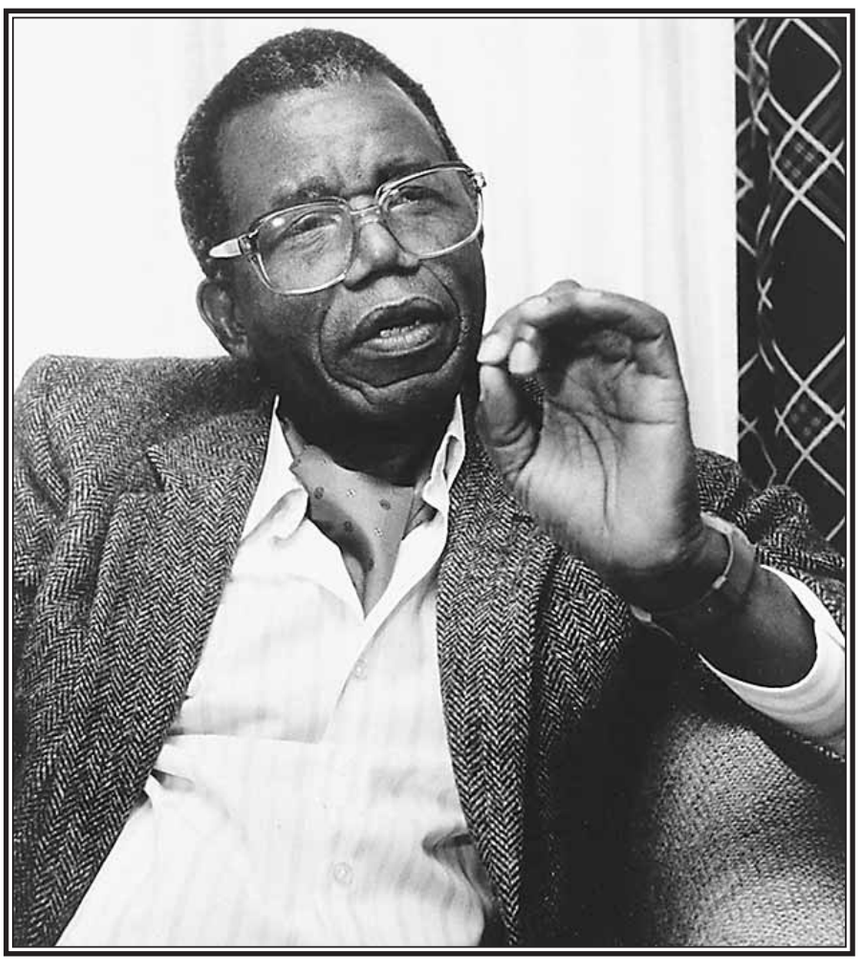
1930–
Nigerian writer

Chinua Cinualomogu Achebe is a Nigerian writer whose novels often explore the difficult choices faced by Africans in modern life. Achebe's first novel, *Things Fall Apart* (1958), is considered a classic and is one of the most widely read works of African literature. The hero of the book commits suicide, unable to choose between radically different ways of life shaped by traditional values and European values.

Achebe worked as a teacher and writer before serving as director of the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation between 1961 and 1966. During the Nigerian civil war (1967–1970), he returned to his home territory of Igboland (renamed Biafra), which was attempting to secede* from NIGERIA. Achebe became a spokesperson for Biafra in Europe and North America. After the war he taught at several universities in Africa and the United States.

In addition to his novels, Achebe has written short stories and poetry inspired by his experiences during the war. He is also the author of several children's books intended specifically for use in African schools. (*See also* **Literature**.)

* **secede** to withdraw formally from an organization or country



Nigerian author Chinua Achebe is known for his writings about the effects of colonialism and Western culture on traditional African societies.

Addis Ababa

Addis Ababa, the capital and largest city in Ethiopia, is located on a high plateau in the center of the country. As home to the Organization of African Unity, an organization devoted to the interests of African states, Addis Ababa is also the diplomatic capital of Africa.

Addis Ababa was founded in 1886 by Empress Taitu, the wife of Ethiopian emperor Menilek II. An area of the city called Arada, which contained the palace, St. George's Cathedral, and the central market, became the center of Addis Ababa. The city grew as noblemen who received land grants from the emperor established military encampments around the center.

By 1892 Addis Ababa was the capital of the Ethiopian empire. However, a lack of firewood resulting from deforestation* in the area led Menilek to consider moving his capital to another location. The importation of fast-growing wattle (acacia) trees solved the problem.

* **deforestation** removal of a forest as a result of human activities

A rail line joining Addis Ababa to the Red Sea port of Djibouti was completed in 1917 and helped boost the prosperity of the city. Population also grew at that time, partly because of slave raiding in southwestern Ethiopia. Many of the people who were captured—and they numbered in the many tens of thousands—were sent to Addis Ababa.

Ethiopia was under Italian control between 1935 and 1941, and the Italians planned to rebuild Addis Ababa according to a European model. They made changes that shaped much of the modern city, including the construction of roads and factories in the city. Arada, renamed Piazza, became the central market and commercial district.

Today, Ethiopia's main roads, rail network, and air routes run through Addis Ababa. With a population of about 2.5 million, the city is also the country's financial, commercial, educational, and media center.

Africa, Study of

The study of Africa has a long history. People have been gathering information about the continent since ancient times. Early reports came mostly from travelers, explorers, missionaries, and merchants. Later, scholars in fields such as history, anthropology, geography, and the natural sciences began to conduct research there.

Early Contact. In ancient times, people living outside Africa knew little about it. The Greeks and Romans were quite familiar with parts of North Africa, but they had limited knowledge of sub-Saharan* Africa. Beginning in the A.D. 700s, the Arabs developed extensive contacts with peoples of the Maghreb and began to explore areas south of the Sahara and along Africa's eastern coast. By the 900s Arabs had learned a great deal about the western and eastern parts of Africa through trade with the peoples of those regions.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

European interest in sub-Saharan Africa began with voyages of exploration in the late 1400s. Explorers, missionaries, and merchants wrote about their visits to Africa, giving Europeans some basic information about the "dark continent." In the late 1800s, as Europeans became

involved in a mad "scramble" for colonies in Africa, scholars began to turn their attention to the region.

Colonial and Postcolonial Eras. The creation of colonies led to a more systematic gathering of facts about Africa. At the same time, European museums and private collectors began to acquire African artifacts*. Explorers and geographers mapped the continent, and colonial authorities and social scientists began studying the customs, laws, and other aspects of African societies and cultures. Some colonial powers hoped to use the knowledge they gained to strengthen their control in Africa.

* **artifact** in archaeology, an ornament, tool, weapon, or other object made by humans

Throughout the colonial era, the interpretation of information about Africa generally reflected the ideas and viewpoints of Europeans rather than those of Africans. In the mid-1900s, as African nations gained independence, the study of Africa began to shift. New centers and associations dedicated to the study of Africa were established both on the continent and at universities around the world. Greater attention was paid to African points of view and research expanded into many different areas. From the 1960s to the 1980s, the Cold War* created a boom in African studies. The competition between the United States and the Soviet Union for political influence in Africa generated great interest in the region.

* **Cold War** period of tense relations between the United States and the Soviet Union following World War II

Today political instability in many African countries makes fieldwork difficult. Nevertheless, Western and African scholars have begun an increasing number of joint research projects in which they share data and resources. In some African nations, the need to devote scarce financial resources to more pressing economic, political, and social programs has resulted in cutbacks in African studies.

Range of Research. African studies include a broad range of fields, from African LANGUAGES, LITERATURE, ART, music, and culture to African history, biology, economics, political science, geology, anthropology, sociology, religion, and philosophy. Some African studies focus on one particular area of study, such as language and literature. Others take an interdisciplinary approach that combines different areas of study and focuses on the relationships and connections among them.

One goal of African studies is to gain a greater knowledge of the forces that have affected Africa and its people over the centuries. Scholars also focus on discovering the roots of the problems facing Africa, such as widespread poverty, lack of economic development, ethnic conflicts, and political instability. Attempting to understand the continent from an African point of view is often a key feature of their work. (*See also* **Archaeology and Prehistory, Economic History, Ethnic Groups and Identity, History of Africa, Maps and Mapmaking, Music and Song, Oral Tradition, Popular Culture, Travel and Exploration**.)

African National Congress (ANC)

See *South Africa; Zambia.*

Afrikaner Republics

The Afrikaner Republics were independent states established in the 1850s by Dutch colonists (Afrikaners) from British-ruled SOUTH AFRICA. The two longest-lived of the Afrikaner Republics were the Orange Free State, located between the Orange and Vaal Rivers, and the South African Republic (or Transvaal), between the Limpopo and Vaal Rivers. Each state had a strong central government, a judicial system with limited powers, and voting rights restricted to adult white males. The black Africans who lived in these states had no civil liberties or rights of citizenship.

Troubled by conflicts with surrounding African communities and a weak economy, the Orange Free State was unstable. The economic situation improved dramatically when diamonds were discovered there in 1867. Although the Orange Free State lost ownership of some of its diamond fields four years later, its economy became more stable. Moreover, it increased its territory by conquering several small African states.

The South African Republic also experienced political turmoil as it tried to expand beyond its borders. In addition, the country was torn by infighting between Afrikaner groups. In 1877 the British declared the South African Republic a part of their colony in South Africa. The Afrikaners resisted the takeover, defeating the British army in the First War of Independence in 1881.

When gold was discovered in the South African Republic in 1886, thousands of fortune hunters flooded the land and European colonial mining companies tried to seize control of the country. Cecil RHODES, prime minister of the British Cape Colony, failed in an attempt to overthrow the South African Republic's government in 1895. Four years later the British declared war on the South African Republic in hopes of controlling the valuable gold mines. The Orange Free State joined the South African Republic in resisting the British, but the Afrikaner Republics lost the war and in 1902 became provinces of British-governed South Africa. (*See also* **Colonialism in Africa; Southern Africa, History**.)

AFRIKANERS

See *Afrikaner Republics; South Africa.*

Age and Aging

Age has two significant roles in traditional African cultures south of the Sahara. First, respect for age and for the elderly is a universal social ideal. Second, many societies are organized into groups by age, and membership in such groups helps define a person's sense of identity and place in the community. Recent social changes have somewhat weakened these values and practices, but age is still a powerful shaping force in agricultural and pastoralist* areas, especially where local communities have a good deal of independence.

* **pastoralist** related to or dependent on livestock herding

Age and Respect. Older people claim a right to the respect of others based on their seniority—they have lived longer than others. They deserve respect because they have acquired wisdom and experience over the years. Younger people have a reason to accept this way of thinking. By showing respect to their elders, they hope to ensure that they will receive respect when they reach that stage of life.

The ideal of the respected elder shapes many African institutions. The extended family is dominated by the senior generation. Elders control property and also grant or withhold permission for younger people to marry. Religious beliefs also reflect respect for elders. Cults* that honor ancestors are the highest form of respect for seniority—ancestors are more senior than the oldest living family members. However, the elderly have power within the community because they are closer in age to the ancestors than anyone else.

* **cult** group bound together by devotion to a particular person, belief, or god

The high status of older people in African cultures is related to the idea that family growth is good and fortunate. People see large families as a source of security in times of crisis, and they want to leave descendants who will honor them as ancestors. The position of older men in the community is closely tied to this concern with family size and fertility. The power held by older men is reinforced by their control over marriages and also over status of young men. By delaying the marriages of young men, the elders create a surplus of young women. If the elders take these women as second or additional wives, they create large families, which adds to their position in the community.

Another factor involved in the respect for elders is their control of information and resources. Not all older people are respected, however, especially once their abilities decline. But those who skillfully display their knowledge, diplomatic* skills, social connections, and ability to perform rituals* enjoy high regard. These skills are considered as community assets*.

* **diplomatic** involved with conducting relations with other nations

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

* **assets** property or other valuable goods or qualities

The ideal of respect toward old age does not always match the reality of relations between the generations. Harsh treatment by older men can cause disrespect and anger among younger men, who may engage in behavior that the elders cannot completely control. In addition, where communities are dominated by older men, the women do not always accept their secondary status.

Women and men experience old age differently. Women may continue to gain status and power at an age when older men experience loss. Women build up supportive networks of influence within families and households. These continue throughout their lives. Men, who tend to operate in a more competitive public domain, must eventually give up some of their power in exchange for continued respect by the younger men.

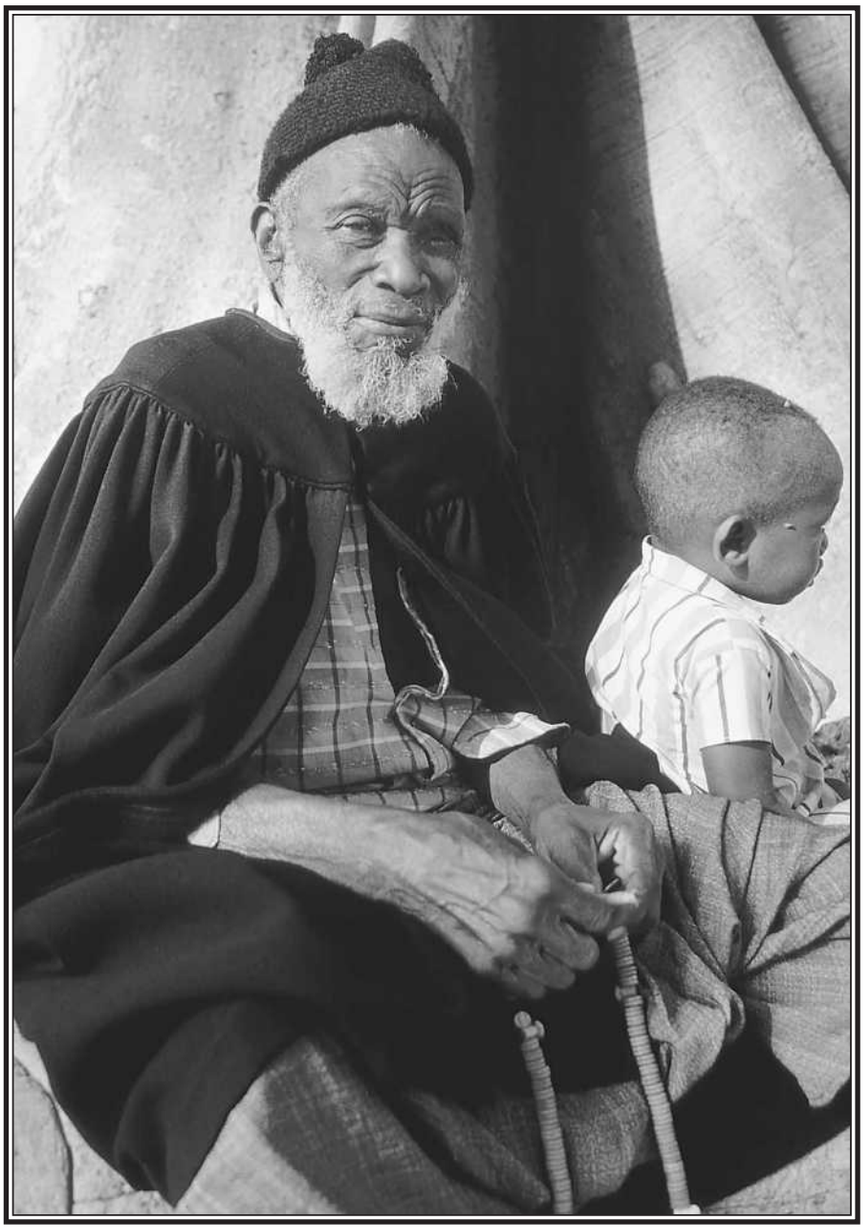
Aging and Age Sets. Many African cultures view aging not as a steady process but as a series of jumps from one stage to another—often, from youth to adulthood to "elderhood." Initiation rites, ceremonies through which people acquire a new status, mark the transition from youth to adulthood. In some gerontocratic* cultures, initiation is a life-

* **gerontocratic** ruled by elders

long process during which the elders withhold knowledge and share it a little at a time. This delays the younger people's entry into the highest ranks. The content of the secrets is less important than the privileges that go with the possession of them.

Group initiation is one form of social organization based on age. As young people of similar age go through the process of initiation together, they form a bond or feeling of community that unites the group long after initiation, even into old age.

Another form of social organization is the age set, which involves dividing the community into groups based on age. Senior groups with-



In African cultures, elderly people are highly respected for their knowledge, skills, and experience. Older men, such as the Senegalese shown here, often hold considerable influence over the lives of younger members of the community.

in such systems dominate younger ones, reinforcing the connection between age and authority. In contrast, age mates, or people within a group, experience equality and bond as peers.

One typical example of a society based on age sets is that of the MAASAI people of eastern Africa. Their system was originally military in nature. It placed young men into warrior groups by age with their roles defined according to seniority. The system has survived as the basis of gerontocratic power over young men, the *moran,* or warriors. Boys must compete with those who are older to be accepted into the next age set of *moran*.

As *moran* they remain in limbo for extended periods, neither boys nor full adults. If the elders relaxed their restrictions and allowed the younger men to marry, the older men would lose their control over the women. Eventually, however, the *moran* are allowed to marry and are also admitted to the society of the elders in something like a second initiation. Not all elders are equal, however. Competition for power continues among the various groups as new sets achieve elder status and older ones are edged out of control.

Societies organized around age systems may regard their own history as a series of age sets. In these societies, the process of aging seems to be halted during periods when family, community, or age-set relations do not change. The occurrence of a significant change—such as a birth, initiation, marriage, or death—brings awareness that everyone is older. At such times, each age set moves forward and power shifts within the community. (*See also* **Death, Mourning, and Ancestors; Family**.)

Agriculture

* **subsistence farming** raising only enough food to live on

Agriculture plays a central role in the economies of nations throughout Africa, accounting for between 30 and 60 percent of all economic production. In many African nations, a majority of the people is engaged in farming, producing goods for domestic use and sometimes for export as well. Peasant and subsistence farming* is the basic form of agriculture in most parts of the continent.

Agricultural practices in Africa are extremely varied. Many of the differences are related to the continent's environmental diversity—its great range of landscapes and climates. Crops and farming methods suitable for the dry, desert regions of North Africa are quite different from those appropriate for the tropical rain forests of central Africa. In addition, the cultural tradition of a group or a region influences what crops are grown and the techniques used to grow them.

PRINCIPAL CROPS

There are two main types of farming in Africa: garden crops, grown primarily from the roots or shoots of plants that have been placed in the ground, and field crops, grown mainly from seeds. Africans also raise various animals as livestock.

Root Crops. One of the oldest and most important root crops in Africa is the yam, a starchy plant sometimes mistakenly referred to as the sweet potato. Grown primarily in tropical or subtropical regions, yams are a reliable staple crop that can be stored easily for later use. Although rather low in nutritional value, they are often grown in combination with vegetables and other foods that help provide an adequate balance of nutrients.

In some parts of Africa—especially western, central, and eastern Africa—cassava is an important food crop. This starchy root plant is the source of tapioca. Although once regarded as only an emergency crop for use during periods of famine, cassava is now planted extensively and has even replaced the cultivation of yams in some areas. Suitable for growing in a wide range of climates, cassava can be left in the ground in both wet and dry seasons much longer than most other crops.

Two other important African root crops are potatoes and plantains. Found mainly in the drier, Mediterranean-type climates of North Africa and southern Africa, potatoes are also grown in the higher elevations of other regions. Plantains, a relative of bananas, have been an important crop in Africa's tropical rain forests for centuries. Used mostly for cooking, some varieties of plantains are also brewed to produce beverages.

Another plant of the banana family, the enset, is sometimes called the false banana. The enset does not produce an edible bunch of fruit like its cousin, the banana. Instead, its stems are used to make fibers and ropes, while its seeds are used for ornamental and medicinal purposes. Found wild in several areas, the enset is cultivated only in the highland regions of ETHIOPIA, where its starchy stem is pounded, cooked, and served as a staple food.

A variety of root crops have been introduced into Africa from other parts of the world. Taro, a plant that grows near rivers and streams, came from Southeast Asia. Groundnuts, which are valued for their oil, and various types of beans have traveled to Africa from the Americas.

Seed Crops. Seed crops of grains and cereals are grown from seeds saved from the previous harvest. Raised in cultivated fields, these crops are found throughout Africa, particularly in the savannas* and regions of medium rainfall.

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

The most widespread of African grains—and the most important food in the history of the continent—is sorghum. Originally developed from wild grasses native to the savanna regions of northern Africa, sorghum has been grown for food for at least 7,000 years. In some areas, the cultivation of this grain probably developed in close association with LIVESTOCK GRAZING.

See color plate 6, vol. 4.

The spread of sorghum, however, is linked to the development of iron industries about 2,000 years ago. Iron tools proved especially useful for breaking and clearing the hard, dry soils of the savanna regions, as well as for weeding and harvesting crops.

Another important grain crop of the savanna regions of Africa is millet. Certain species of millet—including one called "hungry rice"—are especially important during times of famine because they can survive fairly long periods of little rainfall.

Agriculture

In some areas of Africa, the traditional cultivation of sorghum and millet has been replaced by the growing of maize, or corn. Brought from Central America, maize was grown in very limited amounts at first and only in a few coastal areas of West Africa. During the 1900s, however, the cultivation of maize spread and it became important as a staple food crop, especially in eastern and southern Africa. Maize is also grown extensively in parts of North Africa, primarily in areas under irrigation. Farmers who practice intensive cultivation of maize often use mechanical plows and artificial fertilizers.

Two other grain crops, wheat and barley, are raised on a limited scale. Once restricted to the lower Nile Valley and the highland regions of Ethiopia, wheat and barley have been introduced to highland areas of southern and eastern Africa. Irrigation and the development of new plant strains have also allowed wheat cultivation to spread to some savanna regions. Wheat and barley are grown primarily to make flour.

Two main species of rice are grown in Africa. Common rice originated in Southeast Asia and probably reached eastern Africa more than 1,000 years ago by Indian Ocean shipping routes. The other species, Guinea rice, is native to wet areas of the Guinea coast and upper Niger River region of West Africa. Rice does not require grinding and can be stored and transported quite easily. In towns along the eastern coast of Africa, rice gained prestige as a food for travelers and guests. Among the most important rice-producing countries in Africa today are Egypt, Guinea, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, and Tanzania.

Other Crops. In addition to the main root and seed crops, Africans grow various legumes*, fruits and vegetables, and plants used to make beverages. Protein-rich legumes—such as beans, cowpeas, and soybeans—are produced widely throughout Africa, generally in combination with other crops. Such crops are typically grown in garden plots tended by families.

* **legumes** vegetables such as peas and beans

Among the most important fruits raised in Africa are dates, figs, olives, bananas, and pineapples. Dates, figs, and olives are cultivated primarily in the desert oases of North Africa. Bananas are grown throughout the tropical regions of Africa; pineapples are produced mainly as a cash crop* in South Africa, Ivory Coast, the Congo basin, and Kenya. Citrus fruits, including oranges and grapefruit, are grown for export primarily along the southern coast of South Africa and the Mediterranean coast of North Africa.

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

A number of vegetables—including tomatoes, onions, cabbages, peppers, okra, eggplants, and cucumbers—are raised in Africa. Tomatoes and onions, the most common vegetables, grow in large quantities along the coast of North Africa.

The principal beverage crops of Africa are tea, coffee, cocoa, and grapes. The largest producers of tea, grown mainly in highland regions, are Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique. Major coffee producers include Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and Madagascar. Cocoa, best suited to tropical regions, is cultivated in West Africa. Grapes, produced in northern Africa and South Africa, are used primarily for making wine. These are all important cash crops, grown mainly

See color plate 3, vol. 4.

for export. Other cash crops include palm oil, coconuts, cashews, rubber, tobacco, cotton, and sugarcane.

CULTIVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

African farmers often struggle to make a living off the land. In many countries, between 70 and 90 percent of the people engage in farming on very small parcels of land, growing just enough to meet their own needs. Although the environment largely determines which crops are grown, local cultural, social, and economic conditions shape methods of cultivation.

Systems of Cultivation. Traditionally, Africans in savanna regions and in tropical forest areas have practiced a method of farming known as shifting cultivation. Farmers clear trees and shrubs from a small patch of land, burn the vegetation to enrich the soil with nutrients, and then plant crops. After two or three years of use, the soil becomes exhausted and the patch of land is left fallow* for anywhere from 4 to 20 years until natural processes restore the fertility of the soil. Meanwhile, farmers move on to clear and plant another parcel of land, and in this way prevent soil erosion.

* **fallow** plowed but not planted during the growing season



While modern tractors are found throughout Africa, animals such as oxen are often used on small farms. Here, farmers in Burkina Faso plow a field to prepare it for planting.

Shifting cultivation requires large amounts of land. In recent decades, African populations have grown dramatically and expanded onto much of the available land. As a result, this system of cultivation has begun to disappear in many parts of Africa.

The increasing scarcity of land has led a lot of farmers to adopt a system of rotational cultivation. This means that they plant different crops in the same fields, leaving some areas fallow for short periods. Much rotational cultivation relies on the use of fertilizers and other agricultural techniques to maintain the fertility of the soil.

In most of North Africa, and many areas south of the Sahara, farmers continuously plant crops in the same fields. This system of permanent cultivation is used where population densities are very high, farmland is very scarce—as in North Africa—or where the soils are naturally very rich—as with the volcanic soils of east Africa. To maintain crop yields and fertility, farmers use modern techniques such as commercial fertilizers, special seed varieties, and irrigation.

In many regions south of the Sahara, these different systems of cultivation overlap. For example, rotational cultivation is often combined with the permanent cultivation of household gardens. Permanent cultivation of cash crops occurs alongside subsistence crops grown under shifting cultivation.

Agricultural Technology and Labor. The majority of farmers in Africa have very little money to invest in modern technology. As a result, most agriculture is very labor intensive, with individuals performing the work on their small plots of land using hoes, hand plows, and other simple tools. Mechanized farm machinery such as tractors and harvesting machines generally are found only on large commercial farms that produce cash crops for export. The price of oil has become far too high for ordinary farmers to use these machines.

In some areas of Africa, especially densely populated regions, farming is often closely connected with livestock grazing. Some farmers use cattle as draft animals to pull plows and spread animal wastes on fields as fertilizer. In other areas—including parts of Nigeria and Kenya—nomadic herdsmen usually live apart from settled farmers, resulting in a lack of access to draft animals and natural fertilizers.

Irrigation and terracing are two agricultural technologies used in Africa. Irrigation is especially important in the desert regions of North Africa, enabling farmers to cultivate land that would normally be unsuitable for agriculture. In some hilly regions—such as in northern Nigeria, CAMEROON, SUDAN, and Ethiopia—farmers have built terraces on hillsides to create fields and protect the soil from erosion.

The division of labor in African agriculture is flexible and diverse. The ways in which different societies organize farm work vary so much from region to region that it is difficult to make generalizations. As a rule though, particularly in subsistence and peasant farming communities, men prepare the land and women plant and harvest the crops and perform most other agricultural tasks. Besides growing food for the family, women also plant vegetables to take to the market, prepare cooked food to sell on the streets of towns and cities, and work as day laborers.



Women in Cameroon remove the husks from ears of maize, or corn. Originally from the Americas, maize has become an important staple food in Africa.

Rice Research

A new type of rice developed in the 1990s has been transforming farming methods in West Africa. The new rice is a cross between Asian rice and traditional varieties grown for more than 3,000 years in Africa. The African rices, with wide, droopy leaves that prevent weeds from sprouting, are resistant to drought and pests. However, many farmers in the region were planting Asian rice, which is less resistant to weeds, drought, and pests but has higher crop yields. The new rice, developed by the West Africa Rice Development Association, combines the best features of both species. It was achieved through the use of biotechnology techniques and a gene bank containing seeds of 1,500 African rices.

LAND REFORMS AND PROBLEMS

Throughout Africa, land traditionally was distributed and assigned according to age-old political and social customs. In some places, decisions about land were made by village chiefs; in others, by democratic village institutions, religious leaders, or elders. Much of the land was owned in common by all the people of a particular village, region, or group.

During the second half of the 1900s, many governments in Africa began to introduce land reforms aimed at changing the traditional land and labor systems. The goal was to create landholdings owned and operated by individuals rather than by groups. It was hoped that such reforms would increase farm production and create more stable agricultural economies. Along with land reform, African governments also encouraged farmers to grow cash crops that could create export income for their countries.

Such policies have contributed to serious problems in African agriculture. Land reform led to confusion and conflicts, as different ethnic and social groups struggled over ownership of land. In some areas, the reforms left some farmers without any land. In others, government attempts to force people to settle elsewhere disrupted traditional societies. This occurred in Tanzania under President Nyerere when farmers were forced to live in large communal settlements based on the Chinese model.

The increased emphasis on cash crops has contributed to shortages of basic food crops, making it difficult for African countries to feed their populations. As a result, many countries now import food. Rapid population growth has added to the problem, creating a demand for larger quantities of food. At the same time, the migration of Africans from rural areas to cities has reduced the number of people engaged in subsistence farming who grow enough to feed themselves.

Environmental conditions and crop failures have added to the problems of agricultural production. Africa has always experienced periods of drought and famine. However, as populations have risen, it has become increasingly difficult for African nations to cope with crop shortages. This situation has been made worse by the lack of cheap long-distance transportation.

High population growth rates, environmental circumstances, and failed economic policies have created an agricultural crisis in many African countries. Forced to import food, governments have had to spend money that could be used to improve their economies and the lives of their people. Instead, they must struggle just to provide for the basic needs of their populations. The challenge of the future will be for African countries to develop more productive, profitable, and dependable agricultural systems. (*See also* **Animals, Domestic; Development, Economic and Social; Hunger and Famine; Irrigation and Flood Control; Labor; Land Ownership; Peasantry and Land Settlement; Plantation Systems; Plants: Varieties and Uses; Women in Africa**.)

AIDS

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) is a fatal disorder affecting millions of people around the world. A leading cause of death among adults in sub-Saharan* Africa, AIDS threatens to overwhelm many African nations and disrupt their social and economic development.

AIDS is caused by HIV, a virus that attacks and destroys the body's immune system, making the infected person susceptible to disease. The virus is transmitted primarily through sexual intercourse, transfusions of contaminated blood, and sharing of needles by drug users. Mothers can pass HIV to infants during birth and while breast-feeding them. Each year nearly 500,000 African children are born with HIV.

Figures released by the United Nations in 2000 showed that nearly 14 million Africans had died of AIDS-related illnesses, and 25.3 million were infected with HIV. However, the impact of AIDS is not the same throughout the continent. Although it surfaced first in East Africa, southern Africa is now the hardest hit area. The percentage of people infected with HIV there ranged from about 20 percent in South Africa to about 36 percent in Botswana. The rate of infection was lower in East and West Africa and much lower in North Africa—though the disease is gaining ground in some of those areas as well.

In the early years of the AIDS epidemic, the disease struck mainly in African cities. In recent years, however, the rate of infection in rural areas has been rising dramatically. One reason is the increased movement of people between urban and rural areas. Many rural residents migrate to cities to work, become infected, and then spread the disease when they visit their villages. Rates of infection have been highest in areas along long-distance trucking routes.

A number of other explanations have been advanced for the rapid spread of HIV in sub-Saharan Africa. For one thing, Africans tend to begin sexual activity at a fairly young age and often have sex outside marriage. Lack of education has limited the acceptance of safe sex practices. Experts also note that individuals who have other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are more likely to contract HIV. In many parts of Africa, people with STDs may not receive proper treatment because of a shortage of health care services and the high cost of medications produced by Western drug companies.

AIDS poses a tremendous danger to the future of African nations. By reducing the number of productive workers, the disease will create severe labor shortages in industries and agriculture. Schools and hospitals will be understaffed. Large numbers of children will lose their parents to AIDS. Already, the disease has left more than 13 million African children orphaned, and it is estimated that this number will rise to 40 million by 2010. As a result, vast numbers of children may grow up in poverty with few opportunities and little hope.

At present, the prospects for controlling HIV and AIDS in Africa appear dim. Many countries lack the funds for massive education and health care programs. In some nations, officials have failed to acknowledge the scope of the problem. Although some treatments can prolong

the lives of people with AIDS, the cost is beyond the reach of most Africans. Researchers are currently working on a vaccine to prevent HIV infection, but such a remedy may not be available for many years. In the meantime, the best hope is to educate people about the disease and make treatment more widely available. Western drug companies have been criticized for the high prices they charge for drugs used to treat HIV and AIDS. (*See also* **Diseases, Family, Gender Roles and Sexuality, Health Care, United Nations in Africa**.)

Akan Region

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

The Akan region, an area on the coast of West Africa's Gulf of Guinea, lies between the Bandama River in Ivory Coast and the Volta River in Ghana. During the 1600s, separate, competing states were formed in the northern and southern parts of the region.

Before the 1400s, the region consisted of small communities of Akan clans*. These people lived in relative isolation until traders from the north arrived, attracted by the gold and kola nuts to be found in the Black Volta River region and the Akan forest. This new trade led some Akan people to move north and eventually to found several important states and trading towns.

Europeans arrived on Ghana's coast in the late 1400s, stimulating trade in gold and slaves. The Portuguese arrived first, and were followed by the French, English, and Dutch in the sixteenth century. Later, the Danes, Swedes, and Brandenburgers (traders on the Gold Coast from the Brandenburg Africa Company) arrived in the seventeenth century. Some Akan clans moved south to the coast, where they established a loose confederation known as the Fante states. These states competed for trade with the northern Akan clans. In the 1600s several different Akan states tried to gain control of the region. The most powerful to emerge were the Denkyira, who conquered a large portion of the southern and western Akan region.

In the late 1600s a group of northern Akan chiefs formed the Asante state. Over the years, the Asante took over territories in the region and established an empire. They expanded their trading routes and became an important source of slaves for the slave trade.

In 1807 the Asante attacked the Fante, and warfare between the two peoples continued for 11 years. This conflict brought the Asante into contact with the British, who had traded with the Fante for many years. Opposed to the Asante's slave trade, the British sided with their long-time trading partners. In 1824 the British and the Fante attacked the Asante but were badly defeated. The allies had more success two years later, and the conflict was settled in 1831 by a treaty that recognized the independence of the Fante states. To enforce the treaty, Britain expanded its political and economic presence in the area.

In the 1860s a new Asante king tried to conquer the Fante, but the British invaded and defeated the Asante. Britain declared the Fante area a British colony, and in 1896 the Asante state also became part of the British Empire. (*See also* **Colonialism in Africa**.)

Aksum

Aksum was a kingdom located in present-day Eritrea and northern Ethiopia between about 200 B.C. and A.D. 650. Its capital city of Aksum sat on the western edge of the Eritrean highlands and was for several centuries a powerful and wealthy city.

Historians take a particular interest in Aksum because its ruler, Ezana, converted to Christianity in 340, shortly after the Roman emperor Constantine became a Christian. The form of Christianity practiced in Aksum, called Monophysite, was based on the belief that Jesus Christ was completely divine and not human. When the Catholic Church condemned this view in 451, many Monophysite Christians fled the Byzantine Empire (the eastern portion of the Roman Empire) and settled in Ethiopia. This group probably helped spread the faith among the local population. In fact, the modern city of Aksum still exercises a great deal of influence in the affairs of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

Although the economy of ancient Aksum was based on farming and the tribute* received from other lands, the main source of the kingdom's wealth was international trade. Archaeological* evidence and written records indicate that by 100 B.C. a series of towns connected the inland capital to the port of Adulis on the Red Sea coast. These towns formed an overland trade route for valuable goods such as ivory, tortoiseshell, and rhinoceros horn. Aksum grew wealthy from exporting these goods to trading partners along the shores of the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean.

By the late A.D. 200s Aksum began to mint coins of gold, silver, and copper that made it easier to trade with other lands. Most of these coins have been found in southern Arabia, one of the territories that Aksum controlled.

Aksum reached the height of its power and influence in the 500s under King Kaleb. Thereafter, the kingdom suffered a rapid decline and within 100 years of Kaleb's death had lost its trading partners and the territories it had ruled. At the same time soil erosion and the people's overuse of its natural resources weakened Aksum's local economy. All that is left of ancient Aksum are the ruins of the capital, with its giant carved stone columns. These columns were probably grave monuments for the tombs of Aksum's pre-Christian kings.

* **tribute** payment made by a smaller or weaker party to a more powerful one, often under the threat of force

* **archaeological** referring to the study of past human cultures and societies, usually by excavating ruins

Alcohol

See *Food and Drink.*

Alexandria

Located on a spit of land near the Nile River delta, Alexandria is the second largest city in Egypt and the country's main port. It was founded in 332 B.C. by Alexander the Great and quickly emerged as the leading city of the Mediterranean region. Renowned in the ancient world as a center of learning, Alexandria possessed the greatest library of the time and attracted scholars from near and far. Although the city remained a major port and trading center after the Arab conquest of Egypt in A.D. 642, it slowly declined over the next several hundred years.

The French occupied Alexandria from 1798 to 1801. Then in the early 1800s the Ottoman viceroy Muhammad Ali brought new life to the city by building a canal to the Nile River and by encouraging foreign traders to settle there. Alexandria thrived as a result of the newly established cotton trade. After the SUEZ CANAL opened in 1869, the city once again became a major trading post between Europe and Asia. During the late 1800s and early 1900s, the population expanded and came to include many nationalities, cultures, and religions.

When Gamal NASSER became Egypt's leader in 1952, however, most of the foreign residents left the city. In recent years Alexandria has developed into a major center of industry and commerce. It is currently home to more than 3 million people.

Algeria

At the end of the 1900s, the North African republic of Algeria was locked in a civil war between Islamic fundamentalists* and the government, which had broad popular support. At the heart of the conflict was a struggle for control over the nation's future—should Algeria remain a secular* state or adopt strict Muslim rule? The war was the most recent chapter in the country's turbulent history, which has included periods of invasion, foreign rule, and internal division.

* **fundamentalist** member of a group that emphasizes a strict interpretation of religious beliefs

* **secular** nonreligious; connected with everyday life

THE LAND AND ITS PEOPLE

The second largest nation in Africa, Algeria consists of 920,000 square miles of territory. It is bordered on the north by the Mediterranean Sea, with MOROCCO and MAURITANIA to the west, and TUNISIA and LIBYA to the east. The land has three distinct climate and geographical zones: the Tell, the Highland Plateau, and the Algerian Sahara desert.

The Tell. A region of fertile hills and valleys, the Tell (from the Arabic word for "hill") runs across the country from Morocco to Tunisia. It has a Mediterranean climate with mild winters and summers and enough rainfall to support crops of grain, citrus fruits, and grapes.

Approximately 90 percent of Algeria's people live and work in the Tell, mostly in agriculture. In addition, the country's principal cities, including ALGIERS—the capital, Oran, and Annaba, are in the Tell. These modern cities blend Islamic and European influences. The Algerians who live in the cities tend to be more highly educated, more secular in outlook, and more open to Western culture than those from rural areas.

The Highland Plateau. South of the Tell are the Tell Atlas Mountains, which stretch eastward from Morocco. Beyond these mountains is the Highland Plateau. Mostly savanna*, the plateau is marked by shallow depressions that fill with water in the rainy season to form salt lakes called *chotts*. During the dry season, the water in these lakes evaporates, leaving behind salt deposits. Highly prized in ancient times, salt was the original source of Algeria's wealth. Today, the Highland Plateau is home to nearly 7 percent of Algeria's population, and most of the inhabitants make a living by keeping herds of sheep, goats, and cattle.

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

Algeria



Algerian Sahara Desert. Along the southern edge of the Highland Plateau lie the Saharan Atlas Mountains. Beyond the mountains is the vast Algerian Sahara. At the heart of this desert loom the Ahaggar Mountains, a volcanic chain that includes Mount Tahat, the highest peak in the country (9,573 feet).

Although the desert includes more than 80 percent of the country's total area, only about 3 percent of the population lives there. Most inhabitants have settled near oases, where deep wells tap into underground springs to provide irrigation for crops of grain and dates. In the desert's harsh climate, temperatures can soar as high as 120°F. A hot, dusty wind called the sirocco blows northward across the desert to parch the Highland Plateau (for 40 days each summer) and the Tell (for 20 days) before it meets moister, cooler air over the Mediterranean.

See map in Minerals and Mining (vol. 3).

Economy. Algeria's wealth has always been tied to its minerals. In the heyday of the trade routes that crossed the Sahara, merchants carried salt south of the desert to exchange it for gold. Today, oil and natural gas buried beneath the desert sands provide the basis for the Algerian economy. Oil and gas bring in 95 percent of Algeria's export earnings and make up a quarter of the country's gross domestic product (GDP)*. Reliance on oil exports, however, has made the economy unstable. In

* **gross domestic product (GDP)** total value of goods and services produced and consumed within a country

Barbary Pirates

In the 1500s Algeria was a province of the Ottoman Empire, based in Turkey. Algiers became a center for pirates, led by two brothers who were captains in the Turkish navy. The pirates roamed the Mediterranean Sea, launching raids on passing ships. Famous for their fierceness, they were known as the Barbary pirates (from the Latin word for "foreign"). Piracy in the Mediterranean continued into the early 1800s, when navies of the United States and Europe joined forces to bring it to an end.

1986 the collapse of worldwide oil prices plunged the nation into a severe economic slowdown from which it has yet to recover.

Throughout history, agriculture—largely in the Tell—was the livelihood of most Algerians. Today, many people work in factories, the government, and service industries. Concentrated in and around the cities, these sectors* attract rural people seeking work. Overall, there is a shortfall of jobs; in the late 1990s, the unemployment rate was about 30 percent.

HISTORY

From earliest times, Algeria's location along the shores of the Mediterranean made it a prime attraction for invaders and settlers from the Middle East and Europe. Controlled by the Roman and Ottoman Empires for various periods of its history, Algeria was ruled by the French for more than 100 years before gaining independence in 1962.

Early History. The original inhabitants of Algeria lived in the Ahaggar region as early as 40,000 years ago, before the Sahara became a desert. Rock paintings dating back about 6,000 years show the diverse wildlife once found in the region: elephants, hippopotamuses, and crocodiles. These are gone today, replaced by species that are more suited to the desert climate.

As the Sahara became a desert, the peoples of the region moved away to find better land for their farms and herds. Some made their way to the coast, founding settlements there by 3000 B.C. About 500 years later, the Phoenicians, a seafaring people from the Middle East, established outposts along the North African coast, including what would later become Algiers.

As the Phoenicians expanded their trade throughout the Mediterranean and into Europe, Rome was drawn by their wealth. In the Punic Wars of the 200s and 100s B.C., the two powers fought in North Africa, Spain, and Sicily. Eventually, Rome gained control of the region.

See map in Archaeology and Prehistory (vol. 1).

The Roman era, which lasted until the early A.D. 400s, was a time of relative peace and prosperity. The Romans built roads and military posts, introduced Christianity, and provided a market for Algerian grain. But as the Roman Empire declined, its control over Algeria weakened.

For a time the members of a Christian group known as the Donatists led an independent state in Algeria. This fledgling state fell to the Vandals, who invaded North Africa from Europe. The Vandals, in turn, were driven out of Algeria by the Byzantine Empire, the eastern part of the former Roman Empire.

Arab Invasion. In the 600s invaders from the Arabian peninsula attacked and conquered Algeria. Arab settlers sent to rule the coastal cities mixed with the indigenous* BERBER peoples, producing the Arab-Berber ethnic groups found in the country today. The Arabs also brought Islam, which quickly became the dominant religion of the region, as well as Islamic law and the Arabic language.

In the 1500s, under attack by invaders from Christian Spain, Algeria's Muslims turned to the Ottoman Empire in Turkey for assistance. The

* **sector** part; subdivision of society

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Turkish fleet succeeded in turning back the Spanish, and Algeria came under the control of the Ottoman Empire.

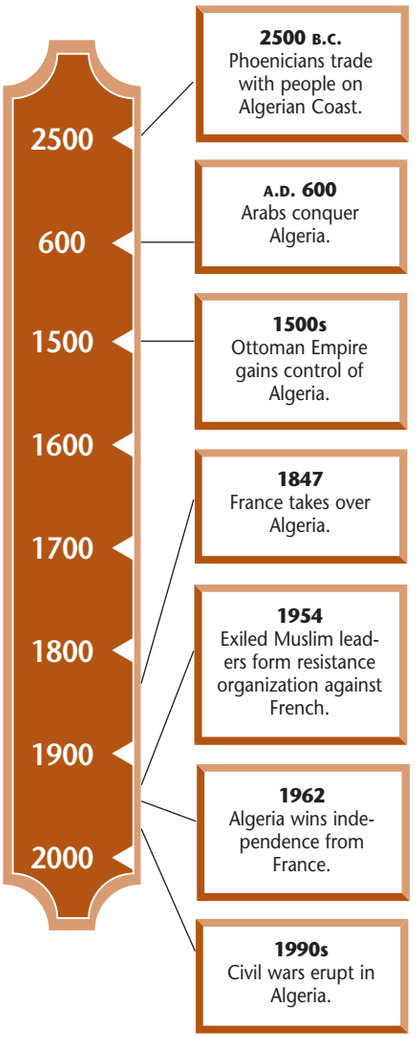
French Colony. The Ottomans ruled Algeria for 300 years. During this time Algeria carried on trade with European countries, particularly France, which was a major importer of Algerian grain. In 1830 France decided to take over Algeria. Using the excuse of a trade dispute, the French attacked Algiers.

The Algerians resisted, but by 1847 France had gained control of the country. To strengthen its hold, France began sending settlers to the region. By 1912 nearly 800,000 had arrived. The French also imposed social and political order on Algeria, replacing Arabic with French as the official language and suppressing Islamic culture. Only French citizens and Algerians who converted to Catholicism enjoyed the rights of citizenship. Most Algerians were excluded from the best land and jobs and denied political rights. It was only a matter of time before the situation exploded into violence.

Independence Movements. The first steps toward an Algerian independence movement occurred in the 1930s, when a group of Algerians



During the 1950s French troops criss-crossed the Algerian countryside in an effort to put down uprisings by rebel bands fighting for independence.



demanded that Muslims be granted greater rights. The French colonists, recognizing the threat that this posed to their way of life, strenuously opposed any such action. The situation gradually worsened. Relations between Algerian Muslims and French colonists hardened into mutual hatred, and Muslim leaders began to call for armed revolution.

In 1954 several exiled Algerian Muslim leaders, including Ahmed Ben Bella, met in Egypt to form the National Liberation Front (FLN). In November of that year they launched an attack on government and military sites throughout the country. A fierce and bloody war followed. In 1958, General Charles de Gaulle of France was called in to resolve the crisis. Recognizing that no military solution was possible, de Gaulle announced a referendum in Algeria on independence and opened the vote to Muslims. The French colonists responded with violence, but they had no hope of success. In the referendum, held in 1962, Algeria's population voted nearly unanimously for independence and elected Ben Bella as the first president. By the end of the year, most of the French had fled the country.

Post Independence. President Ben Bella had to deal with a devastated economy and a nation exhausted by decades of war. He promptly nationalized* the oil and natural gas companies and redistributed lands that had been held by the French colonists. He also sought to build ties with other African nations and with other revolutionary governments—such as Cuba, led by Fidel Castro. However, in 1965 Ben Bella was overthrown by a miliary coup* and Colonel Houari Boumédienne was installed as president.

When Boumédienne took power, the Algerians were impatient for change. The urban centers were bulging with refugees from the countryside who lacked the skills and the education needed to obtain jobs in the cities. Boumédienne proposed programs to improve services and living conditions for the people. In 1978 he introduced a new constitution, establishing the FLN as the sole legal party. However, Boumédienne died suddenly and was replaced by Colonel Chadli Benjedid in 1979.

When Benjedid assumed leadership, many Algerians felt that the promise of independence remained unfulfilled. The FLN lost much of its popular support as people turned to leaders drawn from Islamic fundamentalist groups. After a series of increasingly violent protests in the 1970s and 1980s, a mass demonstration erupted in 1988 calling for multiparty elections. Benjedid was forced to allow free elections in 1991, with more than 20 political parties participating.

The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), a radical fundamentalist party, won the majority of seats in the legislature. The FIS leaders announced their plan to impose rigid Islamic rule, patterned after the government then in power in Iran. This touched off a new round of demonstrations, particularly among the trade unions, professional classes, and women, all calling for the election results to be overturned. The military, with support from France and the United States, suspended the constitution and set up a five-member military council to rule the country. The FIS responded by adopting guerrilla* tactics in an effort to regain power.

* **nationalize** to bring land, industries, or public works under state control or ownership

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors



The Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria

POPULATION:
31,193,917 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:
919,595 sq. mi. (2,381,740 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:
Arabic (official); French, Berber dialects

NATIONAL CURRENCY:
Algerian dinar

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:
Muslim (Sunni) 99%, Christian and Jewish 1%

CITIES:
Algiers (capital), 4,200,000 (1999 est.); Oran, Constantine, Annaba, Batna

ANNUAL RAINFALL:
Varies from 30 in. (760 mm) along the coast to less than 4 in. (100 mm) in the Sahara

ECONOMY:
GDP per capita: U.S. $4,650

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:
Agricultural: wheat, barley, oats, citrus fruits, olives, grapes, wine, dates, figs, sheep, cattle
Manufacturing: electrical, petrochemical, food processing, light industries
Mining: petroleum, natural gas, iron ore, phosphates, uranium, lead, zinc

GOVERNMENT:
Independence from France, 1962. Multiparty republic. President elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: Assemblée Populaire Nationale (legislative house), prime minister and cabinet of ministers appointed by president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:
1962–1965 Ahmed Ben Bella
1965–1978 Houari BoumÉdienne
1979–1991 Chadli Benjedid
1991–1998 Liamine Zeroual
1999– Abdelaziz Bouteflika

ARMED FORCES:
122,000

EDUCATION:
Compulsory for ages 6–15; literacy rate 62%

Civil War. The conflict between educated, westernized Algerians who sought a secular, multiparty state and poorer, more religiously centered citizens touched off a civil war. The FIS targeted leaders who spoke against it, including Mohammad Boudiaf, president of the State Council, who was assassinated in 1992. The government's response was equally harsh, imprisoning suspected FIS sympathizers without trial, and resorting at times to torture and execution of such prisoners.

In 1994 General Liamine Zeroual assumed control of Algeria and made some attempts to resolve the conflict. He called for elections to be held in 1997, but barred political parties that based membership on religion or language from participating. This enraged the FIS and other Islamic parties. The Armed Islamic Groups (GIA) called for a jihad, or holy war, against the government. A new and even bloodier phase of civil war began, as GIA supporters embarked on a campaign of terror and violence against anyone thought to be collaborating with the government.

In 1999 new presidential elections were held, and Abdelaziz Bouteflika won. However, charges of fraud accompanied the election. Bouteflika's presidency has failed to reduce the violence raging throughout the country.

Unable to achieve peace, the government provided arms to villagers to use for self-defense. Local units, called *les patriotes,* formed to protect their communities. However, many of these groups have used their weapons to launch revenge attacks against neighboring villages. The violence, which continues to escalate, underscores the profound differences dividing Algerian society. (*See also* **Arabs in Africa, Atlas**

Mountains, Colonialism in Africa, Independence Movements, Islam in Africa, Maghreb, North Africa: Geography and Population, North Africa: History and Cultures, Sahara Desert.)

Algiers

Algiers, the capital of ALGERIA, is situated on a hillside overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. Home to 3.7 million people, it is one of the major cities of North Africa. The various sections of the old city show the different cultures that have influenced Algiers: French-style districts of wide boulevards alternate with Arab sections such as the Casbah, a neighborhood of narrow winding passageways. On the plain spreading to the south and east lies a growing industrial area and new suburbs.

First settled by the ancient Phoenicians, Algiers was destroyed by the Vandals in the A.D. 400s. Rebuilt by BERBERS in the 900s, the city later belonged to the Ottoman Empire. In 1830 the French captured Algiers; they controlled it until 1962, when Algeria won its independence.

After independence, the Algerian government made efforts to modernize the capital. Many rural people migrated to Algiers, replacing departing French settlers who had lived and worked there. By the mid-1960s, Algiers claimed Algeria's highest literacy rate and had the most cars, buses, hospitals, theaters, libraries, museums, and sports complexes. Over the next few decades, industries in the Algiers region produced increasing amounts of agricultural goods, textiles, wood, paper, and mechanical and electrical machinery. Unchecked industrial growth, however, began to damage the surrounding farmland. In the 1980s the government ordered an end to expansion and relocated large numbers of new residents. (*See also* **Architecture**.)

AL-MAHDI

See ***Mahdi, al-***.

AL-MANSUR

See ***Mansur, al-***.

Amhara

The Amhara and the Tigrinya, indigenous* peoples of ETHIOPIA, make up the group commonly known as Abyssinians. Both the Amhara and the Tigrinya are descendants of the founders of the ancient kingdom of AKSUM, and both speak Semitic languages.

Originally based in the Ethiopian highlands, the Amhara gradually spread out to settle a large area of central Ethiopia. The Tigrinya live

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

mainly in Tigre province and ERITREA. Largely agricultural, both peoples cultivate crops and, to a lesser extent, raise livestock.

Over the centuries the Amhara have dominated the region politically and their culture has spread to neighboring peoples. Most Amhara are followers of Monophysite Christianity, the religion of the old Aksumite kingdom that holds that Jesus Christ is solely divine and not human in nature. Contact with the Amhara has led some Islamic inhabitants of the Ethiopian highlands to adopt Christian customs.

Until modern times, a continuous line of Amhara royalty ruled Ethiopia. These rulers considered themselves to be descendants of Menilek I, who was said to be the son of King Solomon of Jerusalem and the queen of Sheba. The last Ethiopian emperor of this dynasty, HAILE SELASSIE I, was overthrown in 1974. (*See also* **Christianity in Africa**.)

Amin Dada, Idi

ca. 1925–
Ugandan dictator

Idi Amin Dada, a member of the Nubi people, ruled UGANDA from 1971 to 1979. Regarded as one of Africa's most ruthless leaders, Amin used murder as a political tool, and may have killed as many as 300,000 people during his reign.

Enlisting in the military as a young man, Amin advanced rapidly. He was one of the few black Ugandans to become an officer before Uganda won its independence in 1962. During the next six years, he reached the rank of major general and was named commander of both the army and the air force. Amin also became a close ally to Uganda's first president, Milton OBOTE. After both men were accused of gold smuggling in 1966, Obote took total control of the country with the support of Amin and the military. However, Obote did not trust Amin and arrested him four years later.

In 1971, while Obote was out of the country, Amin led a coup* and took over the office of president. Amin began by ridding the army of soldiers from Obote's area of northern Uganda, replacing them with loyal troops. He seized foreign-owned businesses (mainly those owned by Indians) and gave them to his supporters. But the new owners looted the companies, leading to the ruin of Uganda's economy. To maintain his power, Amin sought support from traditionally Muslim Arab countries and declared Islam* Uganda's official religion, though few Ugandans were Muslims.

In 1976 Amin gained international attention when he allowed Palestinian hijackers to land a plane full of Israeli hostages at the capital of Entebbe. Israeli commandos later rescued the hostages. He received further attention a year later when several prominent people in Uganda were killed in suspicious circumstances.

In 1978 Amin invaded and seized Tanzanian territory, which led TANZANIA to attack Uganda the following year. Meanwhile, various groups in Uganda that opposed Amin united against him. These rebels joined with the Tanzanian army to defeat Amin's troops, forcing him to flee the country in April 1979. Amin went into exile in Saudi Arabia.

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

ANCESTORS

See *Death, Mourning, and Ancestors.*

Angola

The Republic of Angola is located on the southwestern coast of Africa on the Atlantic Ocean. This former colony of Portugal has had a tumultuous history since gaining independence in 1975. Torn by a long, bitter, and destructive civil war, the nation is still trying to find an end to that conflict.

GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMY

Angola is the seventh largest country in Africa, with an area greater than Texas and California combined. A small part of the nation—a coastal area called CABINDA—is separated from the rest of Angola by a strip of territory belonging to the neighboring country of CONGO (KINSHASA). Rich in natural resources, Angola has great potential for industry and economic prosperity. However, since independence, frequent civil unrest has slowed Angola's development.

The capital of Angola is Luanda, a coastal city that was once a major slave-trading port for the Portuguese. Although it boasts modern skyscrapers, an international airport, and a state-run university, Luanda has been severely damaged by the civil war. In addition, refugees fleeing the fighting in the countryside are crowding the city's poorer sections and overwhelming public services.

Landforms. Nearly two thirds of Angola consists of vast interior plateaus and highlands—including the Kongo Highlands, the Malanje Plateau, and the Central Highlands. These features average 3,150 to 4,430 feet in elevation, with some peaks as high as 8,465 feet.

To the west of these areas, the land falls in a series of dramatic escarpments* to a narrow coastal plain, cut by fertile river valleys and dotted with natural harbors. Most of Angola's rivers start in the interior highlands and flow through the coastal plain to the sea. Only a few of these are navigable* for any distance inland. Several rivers are tributaries* of the CONGO RIVER and the ZAMBEZI RIVER. One of Angola's major rivers, the Kubango, flows into the Okavango Swamp—a vast swampland in northern BOTSWANA.

* **escarpment** long, clifflike ridge of land or rock

* **navigable** deep and wide enough to provide passage for ships

* **tributary** river that flows into another river

Climate. With the exception of the temperate Central Highlands, Angola's climate is primarily tropical. Rainfall in the tropical regions is seasonal, occurring mainly between October and May. Parts of southern and eastern Angola have a drier climate, and the southernmost part of the country borders the great KALAHARI DESERT. The Benguela Current—a cold, northward-flowing ocean current—brings both a dry climate and rich fishing grounds to Angola's coastal region.

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

Vegetation and Wildlife. Much of Angola is covered with savanna*. In the north these grasslands have scattered trees, while in the south the



savanna consists of low, thorny shrubs. Dense rain forests are scattered through the northern half of the country, primarily in Cabinda. Angola once had more extensive rain forests, but since colonial times many have been cut down by the logging industry and to make way for agriculture. One of the few plants that survive in the desert regions of far southwestern Angola is the tumboa, an unusual plant with a very deep root and two wide 10-foot-long leaves that spread along the ground.

The wildlife of Angola is typical of other grassland regions of Africa. Mammals include elephants, hippopotamuses, rhinoceroses, giraffes, zebras, wildebeests, leopards, lions, and various types of antelopes and monkeys. Angola is also home to many species of birds and a great variety of reptiles, including crocodiles. Among the most dangerous animal species in Angola is an insect—the tsetse fly, which carries diseases that harm both humans and livestock. Marine life thrives in the ocean off Angola's coast, especially in the waters swept by the Benguela Current.

See map in Archaeology and Prehistory (vol. 1).

Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing. Farming is the main economic activity in many areas of Angola. About 80 percent of the Angolan people are engaged in subsistence farming, in which families grow only enough food for their own use. One of the principal food crops is manioc (or cassava), a plant with thick, starchy roots that are cooked and

* **maize** corn

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

eaten like potatoes. Other major crops include maize*, potatoes, beans, millet (a type of grain), bananas, peanuts, rice, and wheat.

During the colonial period, Angola grew several profitable cash crops* for export, including cotton and coffee. These commercial crops declined dramatically after independence as a result of changing economic policies and years of civil war. Nevertheless, crops such as tobacco, coffee, bananas, sisal, cocoa, sugarcane, and cotton are still grown commercially.

Subsistence farmers in Angola raise a variety of livestock, including sheep, goats, pigs, and poultry. Cattle raising is most successful in southern Angola, where the disease-spreading tsetse fly is less of a problem than in other areas of the country.

Forestry is concentrated in Cabinda, where the dense rain forests provide valuable lumber. Portuguese colonists developed a thriving fishing industry off the coast of Angola, which supplied fish for both export and local markets. However, after 1975, the local fish population shrank and Angola's fishing industry became less significant.

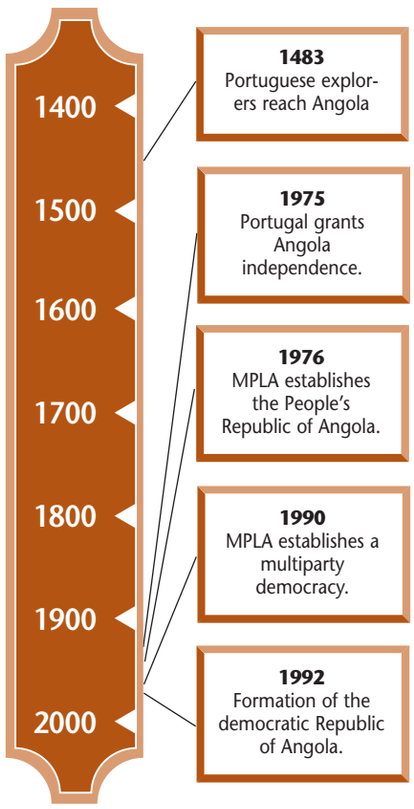
See map in Minerals and Mining (vol. 3).

Industry and Mining. Prior to independence, Angola enjoyed expanding industrial activity, especially manufacturing and construction. As with commercial agriculture, the upheavals following independence disrupted Angolan industry and caused it to decline.

Manufacturing in Angola today is focused on fulfilling domestic needs rather than on producing goods for export. The principal manufacturing activities are oil refining, food processing, brewing, textile making, and the production of construction materials. One major manufacturing center is the city of Luanda. The electricity needed to run Angolan industry comes from hydroelectric plants that harness the energy of the country's great rivers.

Mining plays a very important role in Angola's economy. The country's principal exports are petroleum and diamonds. Petroleum alone, most coming from Cabinda, accounts for more than 90 percent of Angola's export income. Although Angola's iron mines have been inactive since 1975, the nation produces other minerals including phosphates, manganese, and copper. The country also has deposits of natural gas.

* **first millennium A.D.** years from A.D. 1 to 1000



HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

In ancient times, hunting and gathering societies inhabited the area that is now Angola. Sometime during the first millennium A.D.* large migrations from other parts of southern Africa brought Bantu-speaking peoples to the region. These groups eventually established a number of independent, centralized kingdoms, the most important of which was the Kongo. Angola later took its name from another early kingdom, known as Ngola.

The Colonial Period. Portuguese explorers reached Angola in 1483. They traded with the inhabitants and worked to convert them to Christianity. Over the next few centuries Portugal became increasingly involved in the African SLAVE TRADE, and several Angolan kingdoms were

Angolan Art

Angola has a rich artistic heritage. Masks, sculptures, and other artworks are made from ceramic, wood, ivory, and malachite (a type of green stone). These pieces often have symbolic meaning, representing themes such as life and death or the celebration of a harvest. Angola's Chokwe people are well known for their fine wooden sculptures, and the inhabitants of Cabinda are praised for their ivory carvings. Another form of Angolan art is the decoration of the body, including very elaborate hairstyles that are worn by the Nyaneka and Nkhumbi groups.

eventually destroyed because they resisted SLAVERY. Portuguese settlers soon dominated the coast of Angola and organized the local economy around supplying slaves to Brazil, Portugal's South American colony.

Portugal's claims to rule the lands and people of Angola were officially recognized by other European governments in 1891. Then Portugal extended its authority beyond the coastal region of Angola. This expansion led to a dramatic growth in export products, primarily cash crops grown by Portuguese settlers. Some Angolan groups were fairly successful in competing economically with the Portuguese colonists. Nonetheless, all came under Portuguese control between 1890 and 1922.

The further extension of Portuguese colonial power in the early 1900s created great hardship for both Africans and Afro-Portuguese—people of both African and Portuguese ancestry. Many of these people were pushed out of the administrative and commercial activities they dominated in earlier years, and they had few opportunities to achieve economic success. As a result, nationalist* movements emerged in Luanda and other coastal cities. Nationalist leaders spoke out against forced labor, racism, and other abuses, and called for Angolan independence.

When Angola officially became an overseas province of Portugal in 1951, the Angolan people faced more mistreatment by Portuguese authorities. Tensions mounted and led to a serious rebellion against Portuguese rule in 1961. This proved to be a turning point in Angola's history, as increasing numbers of people were drawn into the struggle for independence. By the end of the 1960s several nationalist groups had launched guerrilla* operations against the Portuguese government. Each group also competed for power.

* **nationalist** devoted to the interests and culture of one's country

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

An Independent Angola. Portugal yielded Angola its independence on November 11, 1975. However, it did not formally transfer power to any one of the competing nationalist groups. One group, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), gained control of most of the country and founded a communist* state called the People's Republic of Angola in 1976.

Rivalries continued between the three main groups—the MPLA, FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola), and UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola)—fueling a long and bitter civil war. Cold War* politics contributed to the strife because the MPLA had support from the Soviet Union and Cuba, while UNITA had the backing of SOUTH AFRICA and the United States. In addition, the Angolan government was aiding the neighboring country of NAMIBIA in its fight for independence from South Africa. As Angola's complex struggle dragged on, it hindered economic progress and efforts to move ahead with social programs.

Signs of hope for an end to the fighting appeared in the late 1980s. Talks between Angola, Cuba, South Africa, and the United States led to a series of agreements concerning Namibian independence and the withdrawal of Cuban troops that had been supporting the MPLA. When the last Cuban forces left Angola in 1991, peace finally seemed possible.

In 1990 the MPLA had voted to turn itself into a democratic party, establish a multiparty system, and create policies that gave individuals

* **communist** relating to communism, a system in which land, goods, and the means of production are owned by the state or community rather than by individuals

* **Cold War** period of tense relations between the United States and the Soviet Union following World War II

and companies a larger role in the economy. These changes led to the establishment of a new democratic government and to the birth of the Republic of Angola in 1992. Since 1979 Angolan politics have been dominated by two individuals—José Eduardo dos Santos, the nation's president and MPLA leader, and Jonas Savimbi, the leader of UNITA. Each enjoys support from different ethnic groups within the country.

Despite the establishment of a democracy, progress in Angola has not come easily. The economy has been slow to develop and improve, and smuggling—mainly of diamonds—has caused great damage. Education and medical care are inadequate, malnutrition is widespread, and infant deaths are common. Moreover, the MPLA and UNITA continue to compete fiercely for control. Since 1992 fighting has broken out several times in various parts of the country, and a return to full-scale civil war remains a possibility. Even in times of relative peace, many Angolans are killed or injured by the millions of land mines still hidden in the ground.

PEOPLE AND CULTURES

The majority of Angolans are members of various Bantu-speaking groups, each with a distinctive culture and language. Other Angolans are of Portuguese or other European ancestry, and a few isolated bands of a Khoisan group known as the !Kung live in the remote southeastern corner of the country. Portuguese is the official language and is spoken by



A parade held in Luanda, the Angolan capital, in 1975 to celebrate the country's independence from Portugal.

Angola



Republic of Angola

POPULATION:
10,600,000(estimated population)

AREA:
481,351 sq. mi. (1,246,700 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:
Portuguese (official); Bantu languages (at least 55)

NATIONAL CURRENCY:
Kwanza

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:
Traditional 47%, Roman Catholic 38%, Protestant 15%

CITIES:
Luanda (capital), 2,677,000 (2000 est.); Lobito, Benguela, Malanje, Huambo, Cabinda, Lubango

ANNUAL RAINFALL:
Varies from 0 in southwestern coastal desert to 70 in. (1,780 mm) in extreme north

ECONOMY:
GDP per capita: U.S. $1,000

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:
Agricultural: coffee, sisal, cotton, tobacco, sugarcane, bananas, manioc, corn, timber, fish, livestock
Manufacturing: food and beverage processing, textiles, cement, petroleum refining, fish processing, brewing, tobacco products
Mining: petroleum, diamonds, iron ore, copper, feldspar, phosphates, gold, bauxite, uranium

GOVERNMENT:
Independence from Portugal, 1975. President elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: 220-member Assembleia Nacional (elected), Council of Ministers appointed by President.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:
1975–1979 Antonio Agostinho Neto
1979– José Eduardo dos Santos

ARMED FORCES:
114,000 (2000 est.)

EDUCATION:
Compulsory for ages 7–15; literacy rate 40%

See color plate 7, vol. 3.

many Angolans. However, most groups also speak their own native languages.

As Bantu-speaking groups settled throughout present-day Angola, each formed a culture based on the particular type of environment in which they lived. The largest group is the Ovimbundu. They live mainly in the Central Highlands of Angola, where the climate is well suited to farming. Over time, the Ovimbundu have developed extensive agricultural communities with large populations. Those living in drier areas to the south raise cattle as well. Many Ovimbundu have migrated to the cities of Benguela, Lobito, and Luanda.

The second largest group in Angola, the Mbundu, dominates the capital city of Luanda and other coastal towns as well as the Malanje highlands to the east. The culture of the Mbundu has its roots in the ancient warrior state called Ngola. Among the many other groups in Angola are the Ngangela, Ovambo, and Chokwe.

Although some Angolans continue to follow traditional religions, most have adopted Christianity. Roman Catholicism is particularly well established among the Ovimbundu. Various Protestant faiths have strong followings among other Bantu groups.

Despite the influence of European culture and Christianity, most Angolan peoples still share certain Bantu traditions. Extended families are central to social life, polygamy* is common, and ancestors are deeply respected. Forms of witchcraft are still practiced in many areas, even among people who have converted to Christianity. Another ancient tradition that survives today is Angola's rich oral literature—stories that have been passed down for many generations.

* **polygamy** marriage in which a man has more than one wife or a woman has more than one husband

The country's rural inhabitants often follow the same traditions and ways of life their ancestors did. Others, especially city dwellers, have adopted more modern lifestyles. In every region and walk of life, Angolans retain long-standing ethnic loyalties and distinctions. The many differences that enrich Angola's culture also continue to fuel the nation's political unrest. (*See also* **Bantu Peoples; Colonialism in Africa; Diseases; Ethnic Groups and Identity; Forests and Forestry; Independence Movements; Languages; Livestock Grazing; Minerals and Mining; Neto, Agostinho; Religion and Ritual**.)

Animals, Domestic

Africans have been raising animals for their own use for thousands of years. Species of domesticated* animals spread slowly southward through Africa, beginning around 3000 B.C. or earlier, and livestock herding became a traditional way of life across broad regions of the continent. Cattle, in particular, have played a central role in the social, economic, and religious lives of many African peoples.

* **domesticated** raised by humans as farm animals or pets

Domestication. The process of domestication begins with wild animals. The definition of domestication states that animals have been domesticated when they have been worked into the social structure of a human community as objects that people can own, exchange, buy, sell, and inherit. In biological terms, domestication is something like evolution*. A small number of wild animals are separated from the other members of their species. Over time, these animals become used to living with humans, who may control their breeding to emphasize certain characteristics.

* **evolution** changes in groups of organisms that occur over time

In order to be domesticated, an animal must have a temperament that allows it to accept human control and to live in close contact with people and other animals. It must also breed well in captivity. Cattle, sheep, and goats have these qualities. In addition, elephants are occasionally trained for work, and in ancient times they were used in war. Other potentially useful animals—such as antelope—do not have these traits, which probably explains why they have remained wild.

Although a few types of animals seem to have been domesticated in Africa, many species became part of the human community first in Asia and entered northeastern Africa from the Near East or Arabia. The ancient Egyptians had dogs, cats, and all of the kinds of domestic livestock now found in Africa. It took a long time for domesticated species to spread southward, however. Most African groups probably did not adopt such animals until their populations had grown too large to be supported by hunting. Disease, especially sleeping sickness (trypanosomiasis) carried by the tsetse fly, kept some animals from thriving very far south of the Sahara.

African Cattle. Africa has long been a melting pot for different kinds of cattle. Rock paintings found in mountains of the central Sahara suggest that people were herding and milking cattle there as early as 6,500 years ago, when the region was wetter and greener than it is today. A

The Cat's Meow

Cats have been family pets since ancient times. The cat was first domesticated in Egypt around or before 1500 B.C., most likely to help protect stores of grain from mice and other rodents. Archaeologists have found many ancient images of domestic cats, including statues, cat-shaped toys, and a carving of a girl holding a kitten.

In the 700s B.C., Egypt experienced a great revival in animal worship. Among the most popular cults was that of Bastet, the cat goddess. An impressive temple was built for her, and worshipers left mummified cats with decorative masks and wrappings in her honor. Vast cat cemeteries lay nearby. The Greek historian Herodotus reported that whenever a cat died, the Egyptians shaved their eyebrows as a sign of mourning.

* **pastoralist** related to or dependent on livestock herding
* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern
* **bridewealth** property paid by a groom's family to that of his future wife
* **vulnerable** open to harm or attack

thousand years later, livestock herding was well established in the Sahara. Pastoralist* groups tended longhorn and shorthorn cattle originally domesticated in Europe and Asia, as well as native shorthorn cattle domesticated in North Africa. Beginning around 5,000 years ago, the growing dryness of the Sahara drove these peoples south and east. They introduced cattle to the Nile Valley, Ethiopia, and northern Kenya.

Around the same time zebu, or humped cattle, from India and western Asia were brought to Ethiopia. They crossbred with the longhorn and shorthorn cattle, producing a new breed called the sanga, which spread through central and southern Africa. Since then, crossbreeding has created dozens of varieties of cattle, including newer zebu breeds that are replacing the sanga in parts of northern and eastern Africa. Tsetse flies and parasites have kept cattle from becoming numerous in Africa's rain forest regions, although efforts are being made to introduce breeds that are resistant to sleeping sickness.

The many breeds of African cattle are put to various uses. Some herding peoples keep the animals mainly for milk, while other groups eat the meat as well. Cattle are frequently used to pull plows, turn waterwheels or grain mills, and carry loads. Sometimes cattle are ridden. In many herding societies, cattle are regarded not only as a convenient source of food but also as a living symbol of well-being and prosperity—both spiritual and economic. The pastoral peoples of Kenya do not kill their cattle for food, although they consume milk and blood from living animals and use the hides of dead ones. Cattle are important in many old African rituals*, including sacrifice and the giving of bridewealth* from a groom's family to a bride's family.

Beasts of Burden. The dromedary, or one-humped Arabian camel, is found across the North African desert and the lands along its southern edge. All dromedaries are domesticated. About 70 percent of the world's camels live in the Sahel, northern Kenya, and the lowlands of northeastern Africa, including Egypt. Because camels are extremely vulnerable* to diseases such as sleeping sickness, they cannot survive in wetter regions inhabited by the tsetse fly. In the Sahel and in the northeastern lowlands, nomadic herders raise camels almost entirely for their milk production, while in western Sudan and parts of Kenya, camels are used for meat and transport.

In northern Sudan and North Africa, camels are used primarily for riding and carrying loads. The main advantage of these animals is that they require much less water than cattle. They can tolerate desert conditions and carry loads of up to 350 pounds over long distances. For hundreds of years caravans—groups of traders and travelers journeying together—have crossed the Sahara with the help of camels. As recently as the early 1900s, traditional salt-trading caravans included as many as 20,000 animals.

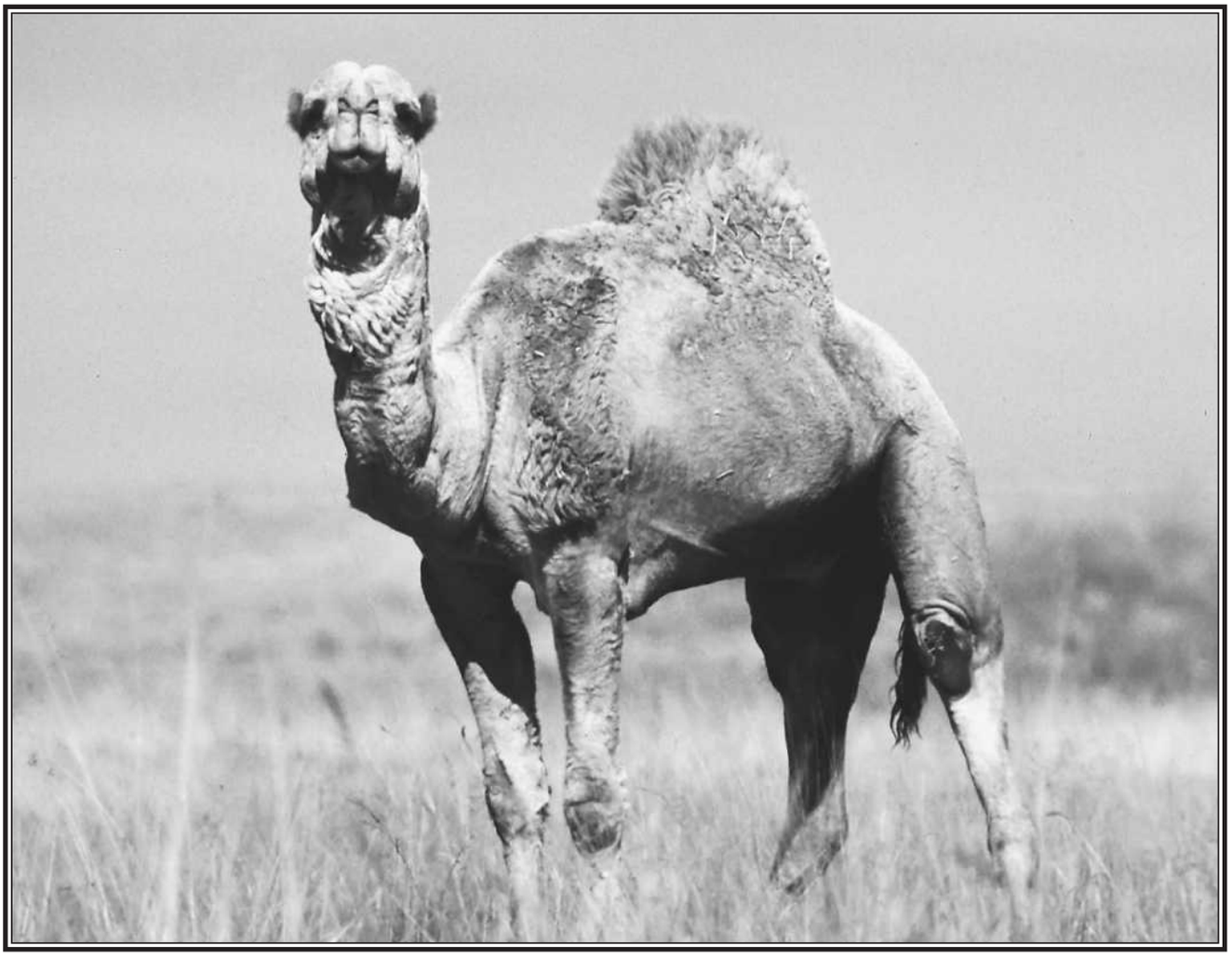
Horses came to Egypt from western Asia about 3,500 years ago. In many parts of the continent they suffer both from sleeping sickness and from African horse disease—an illness that can kill 90 percent of a herd. Most horses are found in North Africa, the Saharan and Sahelian regions, and parts of western Africa. Horses that were originally brought by European settlers live in South Africa.

Unlike horses, donkeys were domesticated in Africa in the Nile Valley around 6,000 years ago. More than half the donkeys in Africa today are located near the Nile region, in northeastern Africa, and the Sahel. People ride donkeys and use them to pull plows and carry firewood, water, and other loads.

Animals Raised for Food and Other Products. Domestic sheep from western Asia were brought to Egypt 5,000 years ago. African sheep today are descended from several basic types, some of which have fat tails or rumps that are an extremely valuable food resource. Sheep throughout Africa produce milk and meat. Pastoralist groups in northwestern and northeastern Africa favor indigenous* breeds that tolerate dry conditions. In southern Africa, European settlers introduced breeds such as the merino and Blackhead Persian sheep for fine wool production.

Goats—also first domesticated in western Asia—have evolved over the centuries into various African breeds. All of them are used for meat and skins, although some are milked as well. In the Sahel region on the

* **indigenous** native to a certain place



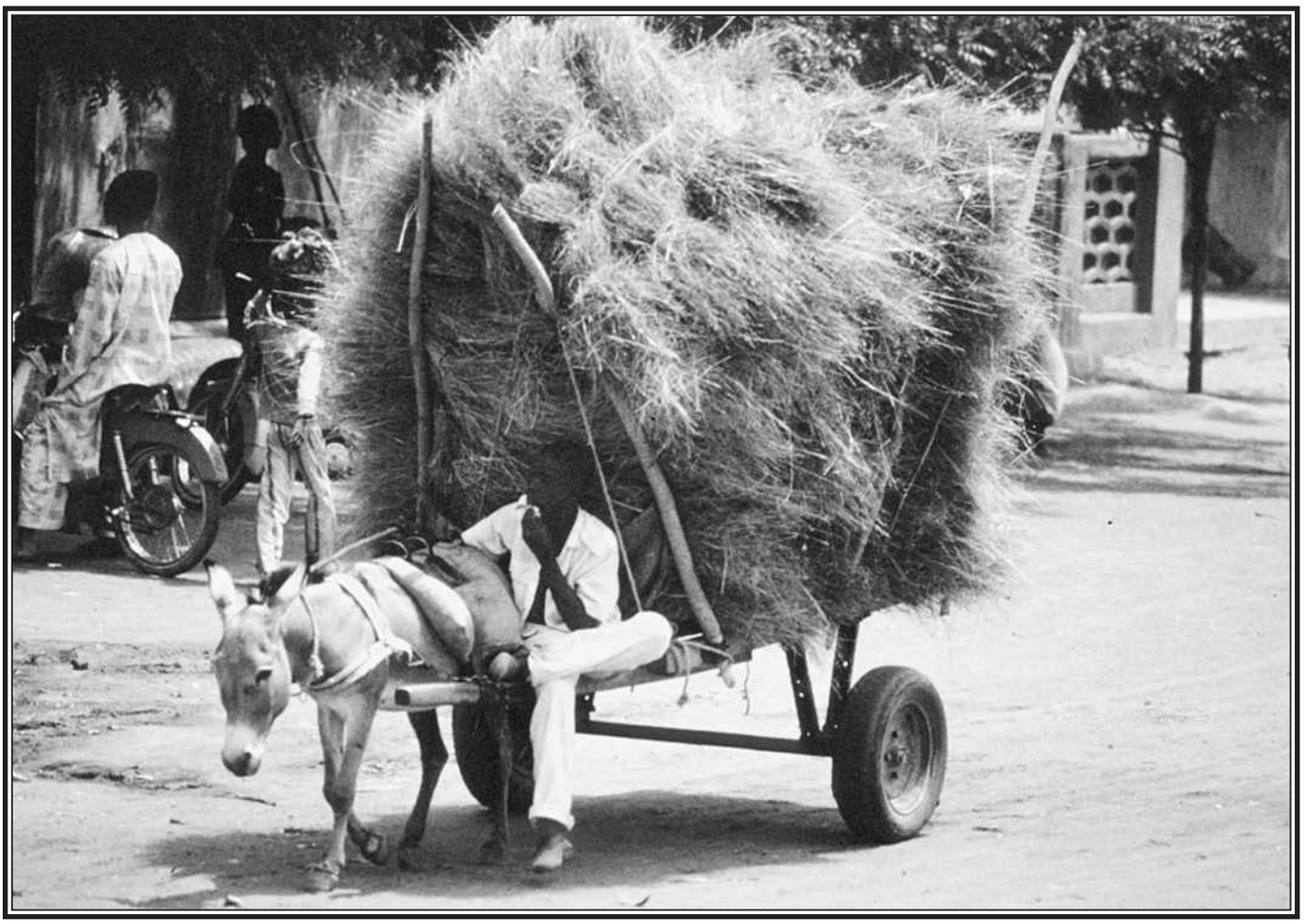
Dromedaries (one-humped camels) like this one can survive without water longer than any other mammal. This trait makes them ideally suited for life in the desert regions of northern Africa.

See color plate 2, vol. 4.

fringes of the Sahara, medium-sized goats have adapted to the area's very dry grazing lands. One such goat breed, the Red Sokoto, has a very fine hide prized by the leather workers of Morocco and Nigeria. In wetter areas of western Africa and Sudan, farmers raise smaller animals called dwarf goats. Angora goats were brought to southern Africa in the 1800s, and since then the region has become a major producer of mohair—the Angora goat's long, wooly hair.

In the past, pigs have not been very important in Africa. Muslim peoples have religious restrictions against eating their meat. In addition, pigs are better suited to life on a farm than to the pastoral lifestyle of many African peoples. Pigs are also vulnerable to many African diseases and parasites. Most of the continent's domestic pigs are raised on large, European-style commercial farms. However, pigs are gradually being introduced into the farming systems of indigenous peoples, where they provide meat in areas that lack other meat sources.

Various smaller animals are also raised for food in Africa. The guinea fowl, a chicken-like bird, is native to Africa and was domesticated there. European explorers later carried it to other parts of the world. Africans also raise chickens. In some parts of western Africa, people have bred the giant African rat and the cane rat as food animals.



Many domesticated animals in Africa, like this donkey, are used to pull carts or carry passengers.

Crossbreeding. Over the last 2,000 years, African domestic animals have been crossbred with foreign breeds brought by Arab and Asian traders and, more recently, by colonial settlers from Europe. The combination of evolution and controlled breeding produced many new breeds with distinctive features, such as the rounded horns of cattle from the region of Lake Chad in the Sahel.

During the twentieth century, Africans called for improved livestock—animals that would be more productive than African breeds and better suited to the African environment than foreign livestock. This demand led to many experimental breeding programs. For example, the native cattle of southern Ethiopia, which can survive in a semidesert environment, were crossbred with cattle from northern Europe that produce large quantities of milk and beef. Such practices increase production of beef and milk in the short term, but crossbreeding may have serious long-term effects on the ecosystem. The unique genetic makeup of local breeds of livestock may be lost in the process, and new breeds may have less resistance than the native animals to diseases or to environmental stresses such as drought.

People now recognize that long-established domestic species are as much a part of the African environment as wildlife. As a result, some livestock "improvement" projects have been halted, and Africans are making an effort to preserve the remaining herds of purely indigenous livestock. (*See also* **Agriculture**, **Climate**, **Diseases**, **Ecosystems**, **Livestock Grazing**, **Pests and Pest Control**, **Wildlife and Game Parks**.)

Animals, Wild

See ***Wildlife and Game Parks.***

Annan, Kofi

1938–
Ghanaian diplomat

Elected Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN) in 1997, Kofi Annan is the first Secretary-General from Africa south of the Sahara. This diplomat from Ghana has worked for the UN since 1962, except for a brief period in the 1970s when he served as Ghana's director of tourism.

Before embarking on his career in diplomacy, Annan attended colleges and graduate schools in Ghana, the United States, and Switzerland. He holds a bachelor's degree in economics and a master's degree in management. He is fluent in English, French, and several African languages.

Over the years, Annan has held several posts within the UN. He began as a budget officer with the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. Later, he served with the UN Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. While Under Secretary-General in the mid-1990s, he oversaw UN peacekeeping operations in Somalia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As Secretary-General, Annan has focused on the international community's commitment to help Africa's developing nations. Annan has

also worked at improving relations between the UN and the United States, which were strained in the early 1990s. (*See also* **United Nations in Africa**.)

Antananarivo

Located on hills overlooking the Ikopa and Betsiboka Rivers, Antananarivo is the capital and largest city of MADAGASCAR. A king of the Merina people called Andrianjaka conquered the site in the early 1600s. Antananarivo, which means "city of a thousand," was named for the guard of 1,000 men who defended it after Andrianjaka's conquest.

By 1800 the Merina kingdoms established control over Madagascar, and Antananarivo became the center of the most important of those states. The Merina restricted access to the city by refusing to build roads and sometimes banning Westerners. Nevertheless, missionaries, traders, and architects eventually made their way to the city and brought European influence with them.

When the French made Madagascar a colony in 1896, they renamed the city Tananarive. During the early 1900s they renovated the city, widening its streets and building roads and rail lines to connect it to the coast. While under French rule, the city's population increased by almost 200,000 people.

Madagascar achieved independence in 1960, and the city regained its original name after a revolution in 1972. Today Antananarivo is home to nearly one million people, and it remains the economic and political center of the country.

Apartheid

Apartheid, a system of racial segregation, was official government policy in the Republic of SOUTH AFRICA from 1948 to 1994. Under apartheid, South African blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry called "Coloureds" were systematically separated from white society, deprived of any participation in government, and subjected to all forms of discrimination*.

* **discrimination** unfair treatment of a group

The idea of white supremacy and racial discrimination had been accepted in South Africa before 1948, and white South African governments had put various segregationist policies into effect. However, it was not until after the 1948 elections, won by the pro-segregation National Party, that these policies became law.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the South African government passed a number of laws that classified people by race. These laws deprived blacks, Coloureds, and Asians of most basic rights—taking away their property, restricting their movement and activities within the country, and forcing blacks to relocate to special "reserves" apart from white society. The laws affected millions of people. They segregated South Africans in every aspect of life and gave a tiny white minority total control over the nation.

By the 1960s other nations had begun to criticize South Africa for its apartheid policies. At the same time, increasing numbers of black South

Africans started to protest against apartheid laws. Partly in response, the government accelerated a policy for creating independent, self-governing "homelands" where black South Africans could develop their own societies. This policy, designed to further the separation of blacks, proved a failure. The homelands consisted of poor quality lands, often broken up into small blocks of territory. They did not have the resources to become economically self-sufficient and truly independent.

As a result of international pressure, increasing unrest within South Africa, and the worsening of economic conditions in the homelands, the South African government was forced to abandon its apartheid policies. In 1991 the government under President De Klerk repealed* the basic apartheid laws. Three years later, the adoption of a new constitution gave equal rights to all South Africans. Despite this change, apartheid has left behind a history of racial conflict, poverty, and inequalities in education, housing, and welfare that will affect South Africa for many years to come. (*See also* **Afrikaner Republics; Biko, Steve; Cape Coloured People; De Klerk, Frederik Willem; Mandela, Nelson; Southern Africa, History; Tutu, Desmond Mpilo; Verwoerd, Hendrik Frensch**.)

* **repeal** to undo a law

Arabs in Africa

Arabs have lived in Africa since at least the A.D. 600s, when people from the Arabian peninsula conquered EGYPT and LIBYA. Arabs eventually controlled much of North Africa. Arab culture—including the Arabic language and the practice of Islam—has been so widely adopted that Egypt, Libya, ALGERIA, TUNISIA, and MOROCCO are now considered to be part of the Arab world. Other regions of Africa have also been influenced by contacts with Arab culture, primarily through trade.

North Africa. In 640 an Arab force invaded Egypt, then part of the Byzantine Empire (the eastern portion of the Roman Empire). From Egypt, various Arab generals moved to the west taking over the northwest African coast. This territory, known as the MAGHREB, was inhabited by the BERBERS, who surrendered in large numbers to the invaders and adopted Islam. By 705 the Maghreb had become a province under the control of the Muslim Umayyad dynasty. As colonial rulers, the Arabs brought their religion, customs, and language to the region.

Eastern Africa. Eastern Africa lies across the Red Sea from the Arabian peninsula, the birthplace of Islam and much of Arab culture. People and goods traveled between the two regions well before the rise of Islam in the 600s.

ETHIOPIA was one of the first areas in eastern Africa to be influenced by Arab culture. By about A.D. 100, people from southern Arabia had reached Ethiopia by sea, bringing their language and their ability to build in stone. Trading relations between Arabs and the local people contributed to the emergence of the Aksumites, who founded the kingdom of AKSUM in the Ethiopian highlands. Ethiopians also crossed the Red Sea into southern Arabia.

By the 900s many peoples along the coast of SOMALIA and the interior lowlands had converted to Islam, and a number of Islamic states had been established. These states controlled trade in the region and posed a threat to the Christian communities that had developed in Ethiopia.

To the west of Ethiopia, NUBIA (in present-day SUDAN) consisted of a number of Christian kingdoms. By the 1300s these kingdoms had fallen to Muslims from Egypt. Their defeat increased the threat of a Muslim invasion of the Christian state of Ethiopia. Migrating Arabs intermarried with the people of Nubia and introduced the Arabic language and the practice of Islam, both of which spread rapidly throughout much of the southern Nile valley.

* **secession** formal withdrawal from an organization or country

In modern times, Arab Muslims have supported the secession* of ERITREA from Ethiopia. To counter the Muslim pressure, Ethiopia has sought other allies, including the nation of Israel. Meanwhile, Muslim groups in Sudan have tried to make the country entirely Muslim and Arab. This effort has led to periodic outbreaks of genocide* against the non-Muslims in southern Sudan by Arabs wishing to take their land and control its oil resources.

* **genocide** deliberate and systematic killing of a particular ethnic, religious, or national group

The Swahili Coast. Known to the ancient Arabs as the land of Zanj, the Swahili coast runs from present-day Somalia to MOZAMBIQUE. Easily reached by sea from southern Arabia, this region was an ideal location for trade between Africans and Arabs even before the rise of Islam. Later, Arab merchants settled in the area's growing city-states, such as Mombasa and Kilwa. By A.D. 900 the eastern African coast had emerged as a prosperous commercial center.

Islam became a major force along the Swahili coast. By adapting to local traditions, the religion gained new followers. Some people converted to Islam because it opened up opportunities for commerce and social advancement. The blending of Arab and African traditions in this region also led to the emergence in the 1000s and 1100s of the Swahili civilization. After reaching a peak in the 1200s and 1300s, this civilization declined when the region was colonized by people from Portugal and from Oman on the Arabian peninsula.

Western Africa. Trade, intermarriage, and shared religious beliefs shaped the relations between Arabs in North Africa and the peoples of western Africa. Although western Africa never experienced significant Arab migration, Islamic religion and culture took hold and spread in the region. Islamic traditions coexisted with local customs and beliefs. In many West African kingdoms, educated Muslims played key roles in administration and diplomacy*. The work of Islamic scholars from the Niger River region (in present-day MALI) became famous throughout the Muslim world.

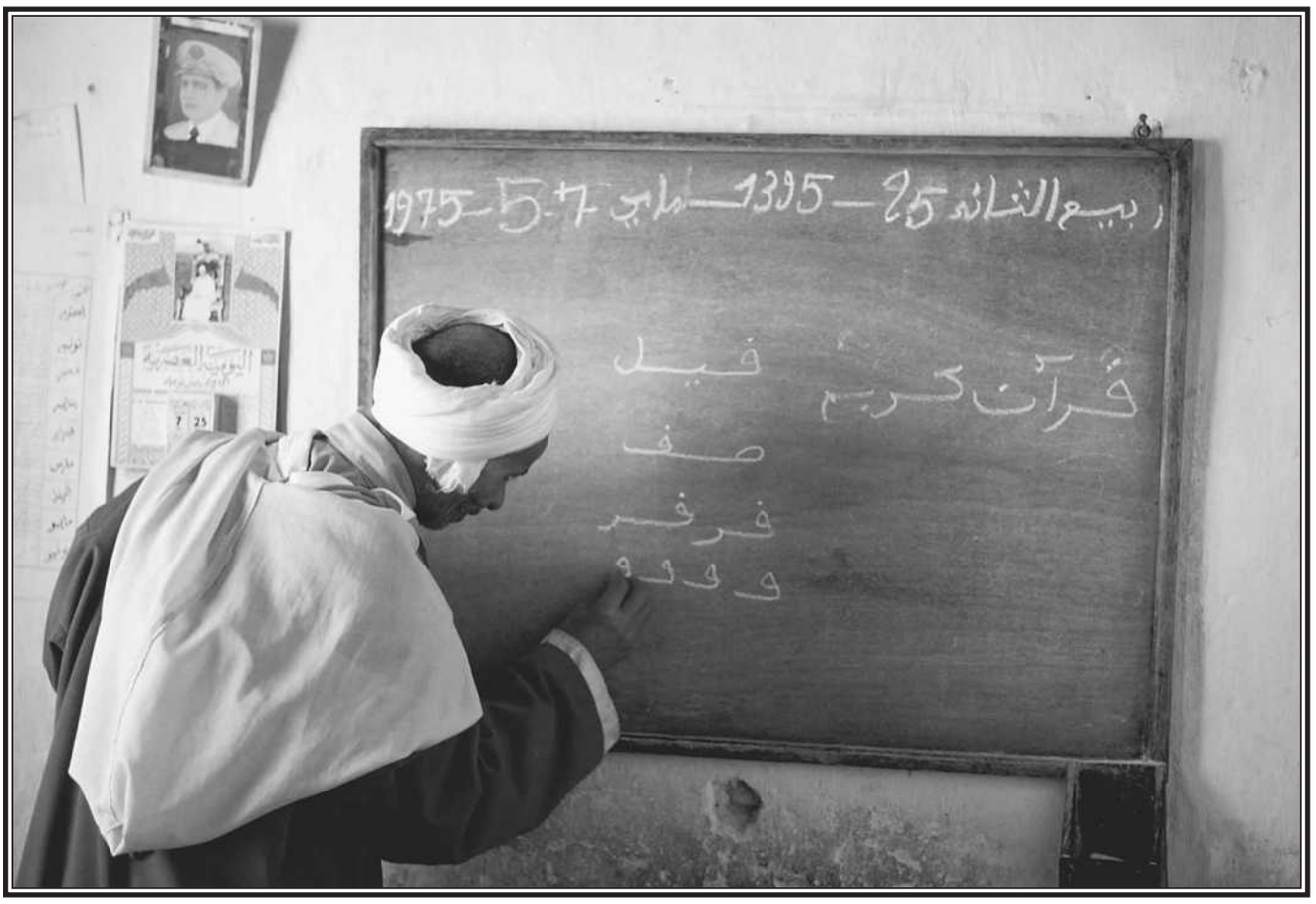
* **diplomacy** practice of managing relations between nations without warfare

In the mid-1700s a strict Islamic religious movement swept through much of western Africa. When Europeans arrived in Africa, they were faced with this intense religious culture, and it influenced their policies during the colonial period. Arab influence is still very strong in parts of MAURITANIA, Mali, NIGER, and CHAD. In these lands, as well as in other parts of Africa, Arab culture is admired; as a result, many people claim to have Arab ancestors.

Colonial and Postcolonial Periods. Contact between Arabs and Africans south of the Sahara desert—including trade and migration—decreased during the colonial period. The policies of the European colonial governments altered the ties that had existed between Africa and the Arab world. The Europeans replaced Islamic learning with Western education, substituted the Roman alphabet for the Arabic one in the writing of many African languages, and stressed Arab involvement in the African SLAVE TRADE. Although the struggle against European colonialism brought Arab and African leaders closer together, the connection between them was based on nationalism* rather than on commerce or culture.

* **nationalism** devotion to the interests and culture of one's country

In 1963 African and Arab resistance to colonialism led to the formation of the ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY (OAU). The OAU played a significant role in strengthening relations between the two groups. Despite some suspicions and mistrust on both sides, African and Arab leaders managed to work together on matters of mutual interest, such as economic development. Numerous African nations, including Egypt, Libya, Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania, Somalia, and DJIBOUTI also joined the Arab League, a regional organization of Arab states.



Muslim schools, such as this one in Fès, Morocco, educate young people through study of the Qur'an, the sacred text of Islam.

Arabs in Africa

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

In 1967 many of the nations of sub-Saharan* Africa supported Egypt in the Suez Canal war against Israel. However, some more recent conflicts in Africa—such as a civil war in Chad—have strained Afro-Arab relations by dividing Arabs and Arabic-speaking or Muslim Africans. Intervention in African affairs by Arab leaders such as Muammar al-QADDAFI of Libya has also frightened some African leaders and persuaded them to seek help from the West to counter Arab power.

* **Cold War** period of tense relations between the United States and the Soviet Union following World War II

Since the end of the Cold War*, some leaders in sub-Saharan Africa have become alarmed by the increasingly political role of Islam in North Africa and by attempts to make it a powerful force in other African nations with large Muslim communities. At the same time, however, a number of Muslim nations in North Africa have experienced internal disputes over territory and other matters. These unresolved issues restrain the relationship between Africa and the Arab world. (*See also* **Ethnic Groups and Identity, Islam in Africa, Languages, North Africa: Geography and Population, North Africa: History and Cultures, Sudanic Empires of Western Africa, Trade**.)

Archaeology and Prehistory

* **archaeological** referring to the study of past human cultures and societies, usually by excavating ruins

* **paleontologist** scientist who studies prehistoric life through fossils and other remains

Africa's archaeological* heritage is both ancient and rich. Several million years ago, the first ancestors of humans emerged in Africa. About 100,000 years ago, the first modern people appeared there as well. Since that time, a pageant has unfolded across the continent's vast and varied landscapes. Multitudes of cultures have emerged, peoples have migrated, empires have risen and fallen, and Africans have interacted with traders and invaders from other parts of the world.

Because many African cultures did not use written language until the last century or two, historical records of Africa's past are rare. However, bricks and stones, broken pots and buried beads, and graves and bones may speak as clearly as words on a page to archaeologists, paleontologists*, and others trained to interpret them. Archaeology, the study of the physical traces left by people of the past, is the major source of information about how Africans have lived at various times in the course of their long history.

The work of archaeologists is not limited to studying grand and well-known sites such as the PYRAMIDS of ancient EGYPT. As they discover prehistoric wall paintings in caves in the SAHARA DESERT, excavate ancient royal cities in western Africa, and unearth tools from centuries-old villages in central Africa, archaeologists are painting an increasingly complex and vivid picture of Africa's past.

INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN ARCHAEOLOGY

African archaeology is as diverse as the continent's cultures and geographical regions. The objects it studies range from the simple stone tools used by ancient human ancestors to the ruins of great civilizations. African archaeology not only reveals something of the continent's most distant past, it also provides a background for understanding the traditions and roots of the many ethnic groups that live in Africa today.

Changing Views of the African Past. Ideas about the African past have changed since the mid-1900s. Before that time, Africa was sometimes called a "continent without a past." People outside Africa associated ancient Egypt with other great civilizations of the ancient world. They regarded North Africa and modern Egypt, which had been colonized and influenced by Arabs after the rise of the Islamic religion, as part of the Arab world. Most of the rest of Africa—sub-Saharan* black Africa—lacked written history, which led some people to think that it lacked archaeological history as well.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

Politics and racism also shaped the attitudes of outsiders toward African archaeology. Europeans based much of the political and social structure of their colonies in Africa on the notion that black Africans were inferior to white people and "uncivilized." The controversy over the ruins of Great Zimbabwe shows how these attitudes affected African archaeology.

See color plate 1, vol. 3.

Great Zimbabwe is a collection of impressive stone ruins in the southern African country of Zimbabwe (formerly the British colony of Rhodesia). Some white archaeologists thought that Africans had built Great Zimbabwe. Many others, however, argued that the site's builders had been ancient voyagers from the Mediterranean region, Arabia, or even China—in their view, peoples from more highly developed civilizations than Africa. Since 1950 archaeologists using new scientific methods have shown beyond a doubt that the ancestors of the SHONA and other African groups built Great Zimbabwe and other stone structures as political and religious centers.

Archaeology is continually expanding Africans' knowledge of their history. Pointing out that archaeology had revealed unknown civilizations and cultures, Mali's national director of arts and culture urged sub-Saharan African nations to "make more use of archaeology to find the truth about their past." They must also take steps, he said, to protect Africa's archaeological heritage from destruction or misuse.

History and Prehistory. Archaeology can be divided into two basic categories. Historic archaeology deals with periods that have written records, produced either by local people or by outsiders. Prehistoric archaeology studies cultures or periods without written records.

Written history merely brushes the fringes of Africa's past. Although Egypt developed written language before 2000 B.C., ancient Egyptians recorded little about Africa outside the Nile Valley. A few ancient Greek and Roman scholars left written accounts of Egypt and North Africa, but their descriptions do not provide much accurate information about the indigenous* peoples of those regions. The civilization that arose in Ethiopia around A.D. 400 also kept written records. However, like the Egyptians, the ancient Ethiopians said little about lands beyond their own borders.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Much later, beginning in the A.D. 900s, Arabs documented their visits to the southern regions of the Sahara and to the East African coast. Europeans began exploring the African coastline in the 1400s, but their descriptions of local peoples and cultures are not always reliable. For much of the continent, recorded history is only a century or two old. As

a result, prehistoric archaeology is the main key to unlocking Africa's past.

Archaeologists studying prehistoric Africa may use various research tools to fill in the picture of the past. Paleontology, which focuses on the physical remains of early humans, offers clues about the evolution* of prehistoric peoples. Another tool is oral history, a group's traditions, myths, and stories as passed down from generation to generation in spoken form. In some societies, oral history provides useful knowledge of the past century or two. Historical linguistics, another tool, concerns the relationships among languages and how they have changed over time. It may provide clues about the past migrations and relationships of ethnic groups. Ethnography, the study of present-day ethnic groups and their immediate ancestors, helps archaeologists trace connections between the past and the present. Geography and geology offer insights into the physical landscapes that earlier peoples inhabited. Of course, artifacts* are the most familiar objects of archaeological research. By studying tools and other material remains of past cultures, archaeologists can find clues about the way people lived long ago.

* **evolution** changes in groups of organisms that occur over time

* **artifact** in archaeology, an ornament, tool, weapon, or other object made by humans

The Stone Age in Africa. Prehistoric archaeologists divide the past into different periods based on the kinds of tools people made. Several of these periods are grouped under the name the Stone Age.

Broadly speaking, the Early Stone Age in Africa began about 2.6 million years ago, when the ancestors of humans shaped the first large, handheld cutting tools of stone to carve the carcasses of animals. Scientists believe that these early beings hunted small game and looked for carcasses that had been killed by large animals. This way of life continued until around 200,000 years ago.

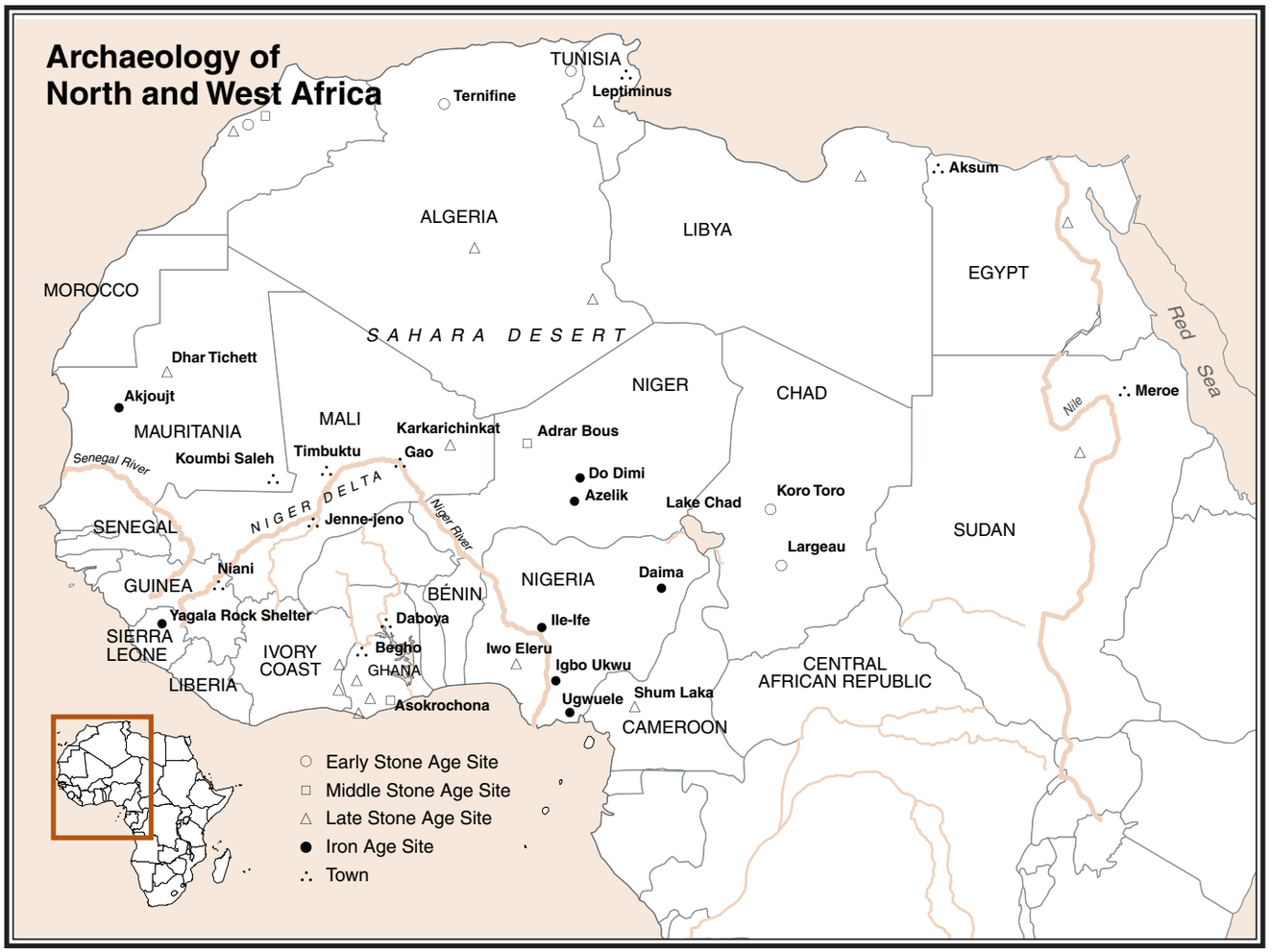
During the Middle Stone Age, from about 200,000 to 45,000 years ago, large stone tools were replaced by smaller tools made of sharp flakes struck from specially prepared rocks. As in the Early Stone Age, people lived off game killed by animals and gathering wild foods. Hunting probably played an increasing role during the Middle Stone Age. However, archaeologists differ as to whether people hunted large game animals, and if so, how and when they learned to do so.

Africa's climate became cooler and drier during the Middle Stone Age, producing environmental changes that challenged people to adapt to new conditions. Archaeologists who study the Middle Stone Age are trying to determine what the environment was like and how it affected human life.

The Late Stone Age, which began about 45,000 years ago, marked the appearance of very small stone blades and tools that people attached to handles of wood or bone. Late Stone Age people hunted and gathered a wide variety of plants and animals to eat, including seafood. They made beads, painted pictures on rock walls, and formally buried their dead. They also produced many artifacts of perishable organic materials such as wood, bone, leather, and shell, which have survived at a few sites. Among the oldest such artifacts are 10,000-year-old tools of wood, bark, and grass, found at Gwisho hot springs in Zambia.

By 7000 B.C. people living in what is now the Sahara had domesticated* cattle. Between 6500 and 4000 B.C., climate changes caused these

* **domesticated** raised by humans as farm animals or pets



cattle-herding societies to move southward, introducing domestic animals into sub-Saharan Africa. The development of economies based on livestock herding and farming marked the end of the Late Stone Age. At around the same time, ironworking technologies appeared in some regions, and new cultures began to develop.

Some of these new cultures were settled; others were nomadic. Some were based on agriculture, others on pastoralist* activities. In a few desert areas and within deep forests, small bands of hunter-gatherers continued to live much as their ancestors had done. Elsewhere, however, African societies grew more complex and began interacting with each other. Around the edges of the continent, they began to encounter people of other races and cultures. Each region of Africa followed its own route to the present, a route that can be retraced through archaeology.

* **pastoralist** related to or dependent on livestock herding

NORTHERN AFRICA

Northern Africa includes Egypt, the northern half of Sudan, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. The region's archaeological heritage ranges from the massive monuments of ancient Egypt to the faint traces

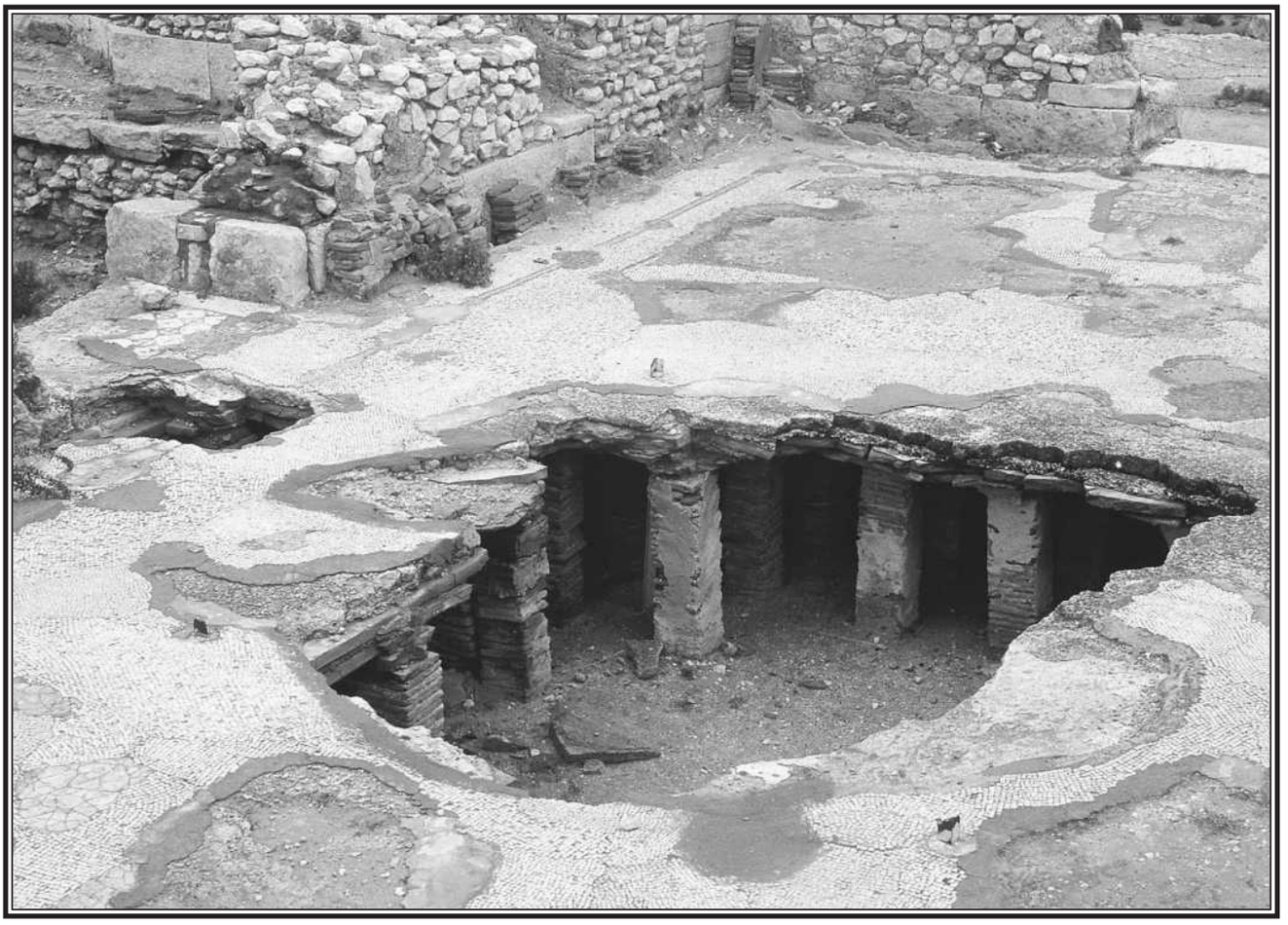
left by pastoral nomads thousands of years ago, when the Sahara was a wooded savanna* instead of the desert it is today.

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

Prehistory. One of the oldest archaeological sites in northern Africa is Ternifine, Algeria. There scientists have discovered both human fossils and stone axes mingled with the remains of animals that lived more than 500,000 years ago. Early Stone Age axes have been found throughout North Africa, from the Red Sea to the Atlantic Ocean and from the Mediterranean coast southward. In the Sahara they have often been unearthed near former springs and lakeshores that supported life during wetter eras in the region's past.

Archaeologists have studied Middle Stone Age settlement patterns at various places in the Egyptian Sahara. Some sites were quarries, where people obtained stone for their tools. Others, especially those on ancient lakeshores, served as workshops for the shaping of tools. In some places, people butchered their kills. Still other sites, back from the lakes, may have been where people slept, out of the way of large animals that hunted near the water at night. This pattern continued for thousands of years.

The Romans, who conquered most of North Africa along the Mediterranean coast, constructed many temples and public buildings that still stand today. These ruins of a Roman bathhouse in Tunisia date from the A.D. 200s.



The Golden Mummies

In 1996 an Egyptian donkey led to a sensational discovery at Bahareya, an oasis southwest of Cairo. The donkey tripped in a hole that turned out to be a tomb containing dozens of mummies—preserved bodies of men, women, and children wrapped in cloth and wearing gold-painted masks. The mummies dated from the A.D. 100s, and their adornments reflected a blend of Egyptian and Roman traditions. One woman's mask combined a Roman hairstyle with an image of the ancient Egyptian goddess Isis. The tomb was part of a large cemetery that may contain thousands of mummies. Excavating the entire site is expected to take ten years or more.

Middle Stone Age sites in the Sahara and the MAGHREB (northwest Africa) show that people butchered rhinoceroses, giraffes, horses, antelopes, and gazelles. A few sites also contain stones that people may have used to grind wild plant foods to make them easier to eat. A location in the Nile River valley that has many fish bones, including some from very large deepwater fish, is among the oldest evidence in the world of fishing.

By the Late Stone Age, people in northern Africa had become very efficient hunters of large herd animals, such as wild cattle, gazelles, and sheep. Starting around 20,000 years ago, they began making a new kind of small stone blade that was often pointed. Sometimes they mounted several little blades together on a handle, a step toward more complex technology.

Archaeologists have studied many Late Stone Age sites in the highlands and mountains of northern Africa, but these may have been only seasonal hunting camps. Between 20,000 and 13,000 years ago, the sea level along the Mediterranean shore was much lower than today, and coastal regions that are now under water were probably the main centers of population. The Nile River, much smaller than it is today, supported a narrow ribbon of life surrounded on both sides by extreme deserts. The people who lived there probably had to compete for resources—many skeletons show evidence of violence, sometimes approaching the intensity of warfare.

Around 11,000 years ago, changes in rainfall patterns increased the flow of the Nile and also moistened the Sahara. Human population expanded into the Sahara, where some archaeological sites reveal fragments of early pottery and the bones of domesticated cattle. At first, people stayed in the Sahara only during rainy seasons. But by about 8,000 years ago they lived there year-round, digging wells and constructing round houses. They also set up large standing stones arranged in lines or circles, which perhaps had astronomical or religious meaning. Several thousand years later, the climate shifted again and much of the Sahara became too dry for humans to live in.

In the Nile Valley around 6,000 years ago, hunter-gatherers began herding, farming, and building villages. In some villages in northern Egypt, all houses were similar in size and had similar contents, suggesting that the inhabitants belonged to a society of equals with no class distinctions. In southern Egypt, however, burial sites reveal significant differences, and some graves had richer goods than others. This indicates that society was becoming more complex and social difference had emerged.

Archaeologists have not determined whether the growing complexity of the region's social structures and technology (such as pottery) reflects influences from Southwest Asia or from the eastern Sahara. Whatever the source, this development in the Nile Valley eventually led to the rise of a great civilization.

The Historic Period. By 3100 B.C. a nation-state ruled by kings known as pharaohs had emerged in Egypt. This ancient civilization has revealed itself to archaeologists through written records and also

The Mystery of Igbo Ukwu

Igbo Ukwu, in forested southern Nigeria, is an archaeological site that includes a burial mound from around A.D. 900. Among the objects uncovered there were more than 150,000 imported glass beads and many precious objects of ivory and metal. Rich and elaborate burials usually occur in highly developed societies, and graves similar to that at Igbo Ukwu generally contain kings. Yet around A.D. 900 that part of Nigeria had no large state. Who was buried at Igbo Ukwu remains a mystery—possibly the head of a religious brotherhood or a secret society. Such groups still have great influence in the region.

through monuments such as the pyramids, temples, graves, villages, palaces, and other structures.

South of ancient Egypt along the Nile was a land that the Egyptians called Kush and the Arabs later called NUBIA. Today the area is divided between Egypt and SUDAN. The home of a black African civilization, Kush grew into an empire that traded gold, ivory, slaves, and ostrich feathers to the Egyptians. Closely linked with Egyptian society, Kush even ruled Egypt from 760 to 656 B.C.

Like the Egyptians, the Kushites buried their rulers under pyramids. The Kushites actually built more pyramids than the Egyptians, though theirs were smaller. The largest Kushite pyramid, discovered at a site called Nuri in Sudan, measures about 95 feet (30 meters) a side. Archaeologists have focused their efforts on the northern part of Kush, studying as much as they could before a series of dams on the Nile flooded the area. Research in southern Kush has centered on the royal cities of Napata and MEROË.

The Egyptian civilization survived, passing through many phases, until A.D. 30. In that year Cleopatra, the last ruler descended from the pharaohs, died. By then Egypt had been under Greek and Roman influence, and sometimes political control, for several hundred years. Some important archaeological discoveries of recent times date from this Greco-Roman period. Among these are statues and buildings in the harbor of the city of Alexandria, drowned by waters that have risen since ancient times.

Greco-Roman ruins also dot the North African coast west of Egypt. The Tunisian site of Leptiminus, for example, was a Mediterranean port that came under Roman rule in the A.D. 100s. During the 1990s archaeologists excavated three Roman cemeteries there. One was located in an area that produced a distinctive type of pottery, a major trade item in the Mediterranean region for five centuries.

WESTERN AFRICA

Western Africa includes Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, Benin, Burkina Faso, Togo, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Gambia, and Senegal. The region stretches into the Sahara desert in the north, but its coastal area consists primarily of tropical rain forest. Archaeologists believe that changes in climate—especially shifts between wetter and drier periods—played a key role in shaping the past societies of the region.

Prehistory. Although archaeologists think that parts of western Africa were inhabited more than 2 million years ago, they do not yet have a clear picture of the earliest settlements. In 1995 scientists found a fossil jaw and seven teeth at Koro Toro, Chad. The fossils came from an australopithecine, an early kind of human ancestor previously known only from sites in eastern and southern Africa.

Stone tools from both the Early Stone Age and the Middle Stone Age occur widely in western Africa, especially in the Sahara and northern Nigeria. At Asokrochona in Ghana and other sites in the southern part

of the region, archaeologists have found tools from the Middle Stone Age that may have been used in woodworking.

See color plate 2, vol. 2.

Relics of the Late Stone Age show how climate affected human life in the region. During a very dry period between 20,000 and 12,000 years ago, the Sahara desert extended farther than it does today, and no traces of human life from that time have been found in the northern part of the region. During the wetter years that followed, the Sahara was reoccupied, probably from the north. Rock paintings of elephants and wild buffalo in areas that are now extremely dry may date from this period.

Work at a number of Saharan sites has revealed harpoons and the remains of fish, crocodiles, and hippopotamuses, suggesting that people of this period had access to lakes and rivers. In 1998 archaeologists discovered a boat more than 25 feet long near the Yobe River in northeastern Nigeria. Known as the Dufuna canoe, it dates from around 6500 B.C. and is thought to be Africa's oldest boat.

See color plate 3, vol. 3.

Archaeological sites throughout western Africa highlight milestones in the region's prehistory. At a place called Iwo Eleru in the forested area of southwestern Nigeria, scientists have uncovered a rock shelter that was inhabited as early as 10,000 years ago. The shelter contained many small stone blades that may have been used as arrowheads or, attached to handles, as cutting tools. Pottery found in the Sahara dates from the same period. Cattle skeletons excavated at a site called Adrar Bous in Niger show that people were herding domestic cattle, sheep, and goats about 4,000 years ago. Other archaeological discoveries in Mali and Mauritania suggest that agriculture—specifically, the farming of millet, a cereal grain—began in the region between 4,000 and 3,000 years ago.

Beginning around 2000 B.C., agricultural production increased and settled communities developed in the forest and savanna regions in the southern part of western Africa. More than two dozen sites in Ghana and Ivory Coast have revealed houses in large settlements, complete with a variety of stone tools, remains of sheep and goats, and pottery vessels and figurines.

Around the same time, people in the area began to work metal. They may have learned techniques from cultures in Sudan and North Africa or developed them on their own. Discoveries in Niger show that people there worked copper as early as 2000 B.C. The earliest evidence of iron-working, also in Niger, dates from about 1000 B.C., although iron tools did not completely replace stone tools. A few centuries later, Nigeria, Mali, Ghana, Chad, and Senegal were also producing iron.

Historians used to think that western Africa developed large urban centers and complex social structures as a result of contact with Arabs from North Africa after the A.D. 600s. Growing archaeological evidence, however, reveals large, complex societies in western Africa long before that time. Some of the earliest such evidence comes from the Saharan Borderlands, where archaeologists excavated the city of Jenne-jeno in Mali. Established by 250 B.C., the town entered a period of rapid growth some 500 years later.

Elsewhere in western Africa large earthen mounds have been found. These contain burial chambers, human sacrifices, and various objects buried with the dead. Some archaeologists believe that such sites,

together with evidence of expanding trade across the region, suggest the development of larger states and kingdoms. The trend toward centralization of power would eventually produce a number of great empires in western Africa.

The Historic Period. Oral tradition and a few written records, including accounts by Arab travelers, provide archaeologists with additional insights into western African states after A.D. 1000. Ancient Ghana, the subject of many of these reports, extended over much of present-day Mauritania, Mali, and Senegal. Arabic sources refer to Ghana as a flourishing kingdom. One description of a king's burial has shed light on the ritual purpose of burial mounds in the area. At Koumbi Saleh, a site in Mauritania thought to have been Ghana's capital, researchers have unearthed multistory stone buildings and graveyards.

As Ghana's influence faded, the kingdom of Mali became powerful in the region, reaching its peak in the 1200s and 1300s. Some archaeologists believe that Niani, a site in present-day Guinea, was the capital of Mali. Although the site has extensive ruins, excavations suggest that it was unoccupied during Mali's most powerful era. The exact location of the capital, as well as the true extent of ancient Mali, remain undetermined.

Arabic and European sources describe the rich and powerful kingdom of Benin in Nigeria, which reached its peak between the 1200s and 1600s. Archaeologists have added detail to these written accounts. Their research reveals that the inhabitants of Benin City, the capital, worked with copper and built massive earthen walls around important structures.

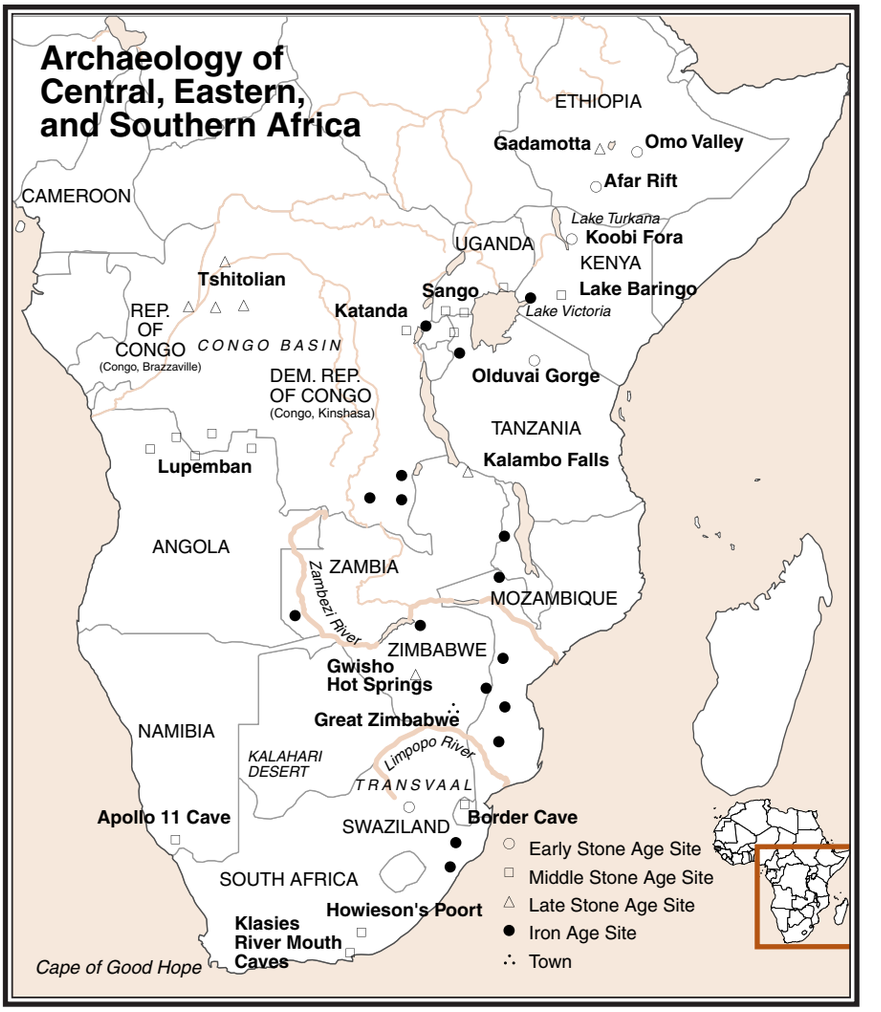
See color plate 5, vol. 2.

Archaeological sites along the coast of western Africa include forts and castles built by Europeans as they explored and traded in the area in the 1400s and later. Recent archaeological work has focused on indigenous towns and states near these European outposts, studying how local Africans responded to contact and trade with Europeans. One of the most fully studied sites is Elmina on the coast of Ghana, the location of the first and largest European trading post in sub-Saharan Africa. By the 1800s, the African town there had grown to 15,000 or 20,000 inhabitants. Excavations have revealed evidence of far-flung trade: European pottery, glass and beads, and fine ceramics from China.

EASTERN AFRICA

Eastern Africa includes Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania, and Uganda. Organized archaeological research did not begin in this region until around 1960, though some earlier work was done by colonial officials who collected various artifacts.

Eastern Africa first became famous in the 1960s when dramatic fossil discoveries were made by members of the LEAKEY FAMILY. These findings cast new light on the earliest human origins in Africa. Other archaeological work has focused on more recent eras in the region's human history.



A key feature of current archaeology in the region is the growing participation of African scientists, students, universities, and museums. Interpretation of the region's history was once largely in the hands of Westerners, but now more local archaeologists and other scholars are studying their own past. In addition, eastern Africa has turned some archaeological sites into tourist attractions and has created local museums to educate schools and communities about their archaeological heritage.

See color plate 1, vol. 2.

Prehistory. Discoveries by the Leakeys and others have made sites in eastern Africa, such as the well-known Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania, centers of paleoarchaeological research. Paleoarchaeology concerns the study of very old traces of human existence and culture. One area of research is the evolution of the first humans several million years ago. Another is the emergence of the modern human species, *Homo sapiens*.

Theories that suggest an African origin for *Homo sapiens* have focused attention on the Middle Stone Age sites, such as Gadamotta near Lake

Zwai in Ethiopia. The inhabitants of Gadamotta used obsidian—glassy, volcanic rock that can hold a sharp edge—to manufacture tools more than 200,000 years ago. Other important sites in Tanzania contain stone tools more than 100,000 years old.

Archaeological remains from the Late Stone Age, including small stone tools and rock art, are found at many sites in eastern African. At Gamble's Cave and Nderit Drift, near Lake Nakuru in Kenya, archaeologists have found blades, scrapers, and other tools crafted from obsidian between 13,000 and 9,000 years ago. Sites on the shores of Lake Turkana in Kenya have revealed bone harpoons, stone scrapers, scrapers, grinding stones, and pottery. Hunter-gatherers there ate a wide variety of foods, including crocodile, hippopotamus, fish, and plants. In the vicinity of Lake Victoria, Africa's largest lake, archaeologists have located relics of a hunter-gatherer population they call the Oltome culture. Among its artifacts are pieces of highly decorated pottery with stamped decorations. The best-known Oltome site is Gogo Falls, which dates from between 4000 and 1000 B.C.

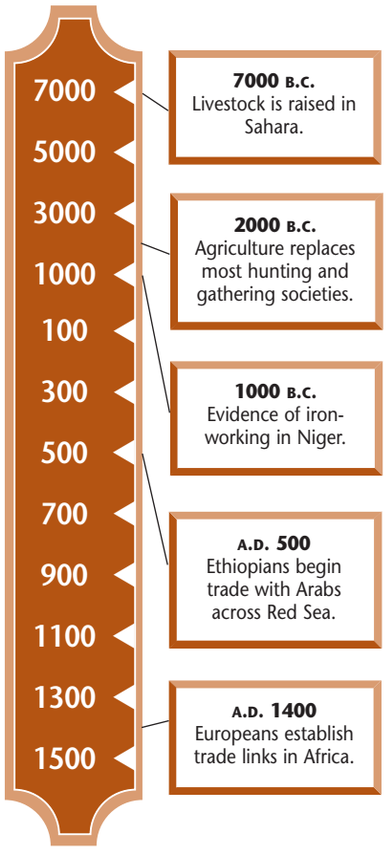
Archaeological evidence suggests that the herding of domestic livestock began in eastern Africa about 4,000 to 5,000 years ago, and many groups in the region still follow a pastoral way of life. The most common domesticated animals were cattle, sheep, and goats, though archaeologists have also uncovered bones of camels from sites in Ethiopia and northern Kenya. The earliest indications of farming in the region come from Lalibela Cave in the highlands of Ethiopia, which contained traces of beans, barley, and chickpeas. Evidence of domesticated wheat, grapes, and lentils has been found at other Ethiopian sites. Although grown in eastern Africa, all these food plants originated in the Near East and would have been introduced to the region.

Remember: Words in small capital letters have separate entries, and the index at the end of this volume will guide you to more information on many topics.

An economy that combined farming and trading developed rapidly in the Ethiopian highlands starting about 2,500 years ago. Local African communities traded valuable raw materials, such as gold, skins, and ivory, across the Red Sea to the Arabian peninsula. Several hundred years later, Ethiopia became part of a trading network that also crossed the Indian Ocean. These farming communities of Ethiopia are known from archaeological excavations at AKSUM, which eventually developed into a major state.

The first communities to use iron in eastern Africa arose along the shores of Lake Victoria between 2,500 and 1,700 years ago. Archaeologists have not yet identified the origins of these communities, and evidence remains scarce. By about A.D. 500, farmers using iron tools seem to have occupied areas of eastern Africa with wooded and wet environments, especially the coastal hills and plains.

Historic Era. Early evidence of complex African societies comes from the coast of eastern Africa, where urban communities based on Indian Ocean trading networks were developing by A.D. 800. Some communities built large structures of timber, coral, and limestone and minted their own coins. There is evidence of Islam, the religion that originated in Arabia. The inhabitants of these urban centers at Zanzibar and elsewhere along the coast were the ancestors of the SWAHILI coastal traders who now live in east African towns such as Mombasa.



Fierce debate has swirled around the origins of the Swahili coastal communities. Earlier generations claimed that Asian colonists had "brought civilization to Africa." However, Swahili is a native African language. Archaeologists now believe that the Swahili coastal culture originated in Africa but that colonists from southern Arabia influenced the culture.

The pattern of peoples and cultures in eastern Africa today is largely the result of events during the past thousand years. Chief among these events are migrations from the north, with waves of livestock-herding people settling in the area. The newcomers developed a dairy economy, keeping cattle for milk and sheep and goats for meat.

The past thousand years also saw the emergence of large population centers around the lakes of eastern Africa. One such center, Bigo, had earthen walls more than 6.2 miles long, with ditches up to 16 feet deep. Some states that appeared in the region later, such as Buganda and Bunyoro, have survived.

CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

Africa's central and southern regions include Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, São Tomé and Principe, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Archaeological sites in these areas contain evidence for the origins and evolution of humans, as well as more recent remains of complex civilizations and trade networks. Research has been uneven, however, and many areas remain unexplored.

Prehistory. Archaeologists first uncovered fossils of humanlike australopithecines in South Africa in the 1920s and 1930s. The importance of these discoveries was not immediately recognized, but eventually paleontologists realized that australopithecines are the earliest human ancestors. Most likely they lived by gathering wild foods and scavenging carcasses killed by large animals. Some of the australopithecine fossils found in the region were individuals killed by animals, and the sites where they were found do not necessarily represent the places where they lived or made tools of stone and bone.

Some archaeological sites in southern Africa, such as Border Cave in Swaziland and Klasies River Mouth on the coast of South Africa, contain skeletons of *Homo sapiens* along with evidence of "modern" behavior such as the development of family groups, food sharing, and the planned use of resources. These sites may be more than 100,000 years old.

Archaeological evidence shows that, during the Late Stone Age, the peoples of central and southern Africa were largely nomadic, moving with the seasons between mountainous areas and low-lying lands. They trapped and hunted animals, gathered a wide variety of plant foods, and used marine resources such as shellfish. They also carefully buried their dead, sometimes placing various objects in the grave, and painted complex images on the walls of rock shelters—facts that lead archaeologists



Louis and Mary Leakey, shown here at work in Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania, made major contributions to scientific knowledge about human origins.

to believe that these Stone Age people had a strong sense of the spiritual world.

Around 2,000 years ago, the Stone Age way of life began to change in the region. In the drier western areas, domesticated sheep became an important part of the economy. Scientists debate the origins of this pastoralism, questioning whether local hunter-gatherers developed livestock herding on their own, or whether pastoral peoples arrived in the region from the north. Researchers agree, however, that the early pastoralists were the ancestors of the KHOISAN, the indigenous people of southern Africa.

In parts of central and southern Africa with fairly dependable summer rainfall, people adopted a system of mixed agriculture, combining grain farming with livestock raising. Excavation of many ancient villages has shown that this way of life was firmly established by A.D. 200. The villages were linked by the exchange of goods, such as food products, pottery, salt, and iron. They may also have interacted with hunter-gatherers who still followed the Stone Age way of life because stone tools have been found in some village sites.

Historic Era. The archaeological picture of central and southern Africa is clearer for the past thousand years or so. Domestic livestock, especially cattle, became very important throughout much of the region. Farming settlements spread into the highlands, where ruins of stone-built communities indicate the existence of large, thriving populations.

By the A.D. 1100s, complex states were emerging. Mapungabwe and other hilltop towns along the Limpopo River in Zimbabwe and Botswana were centers of such states. These societies were organized into different economic and social classes. Their rulers controlled both the local economy and connections with the outside world. These links occurred with traders from Arabia on the coast of the Indian Ocean, where African goods such as gold, ivory, and animal skins were exchanged for foreign items such as glass beads and cotton cloth.

The Mapungabwe state was followed by Great Zimbabwe, which flourished until the 1400s. At its peak Great Zimbabwe probably had a population of more than 10,000 people and included territory from eastern Botswana to near the Indian Ocean. The large stone walls in the center of the town reflected the high status of the ruling class; ordinary people lived in mud and thatch houses around the central stone buildings. More than 50 smaller regional centers, built in the same style, helped maintain the power of Great Zimbabwe.

The Arab traders who linked southern Africa to the Indian Ocean limited their settlements to the coast. European colonists, beginning with the Portuguese in the early 1500s, ventured into the interior. They were following rumors of vast wealth. Portuguese forts, Dutch trading posts, and British colonial buildings and settlements are the focus of archaeological research into the recent colonial past of southern and central Africa. Many parts of the region, however, are not well known archaeologically. Much work remains to be done, particularly in the great tropical rain forest that covers much of central Africa. Future research will

undoubtedly challenge and change present ideas about the past of central and southern Africa and of the continent as a whole. (*See also* **Africa, Study of; Animals, Domestic; Art; History of Africa; Hunting and Gathering; Humans, Early; Islam in Africa; Livestock Grazing; Roman Africa; Sudanic Empires of Western Africa**.)

Architecture

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

From small mud huts to towering steel skyscrapers, African architecture is a mix of indigenous* and foreign, old and new. The continent's diverse architecture reflects its varied climates and environments as well as the many different cultures and traditions of African peoples. Outside influences have played a major role as well. European designs and building methods can be seen in countries throughout the continent, and Islam has shaped much of the architecture of North Africa. Nonetheless, African traditions continue to be the most important factor.

TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE

Indigenous architecture in Africa is closely connected to the lives of the people of an area. Their social systems, livelihood, and religion influence the type of structures they build and the way in which they lay out their communities. The climate and natural resources of a region also play a role in determining the forms and materials used in construction. Both culture and natural resources of an area affect the way people create and decorate their architecture.

See color plate 9, vol. 4.

Role of Culture. People throughout Africa have developed styles of architecture that are central to the cultures of particular ethnic groups. In many rural societies, especially those based on agriculture, people live in compounds consisting of several separate buildings connected to or surrounded by a wall or fence. Such compounds typically house an extended network of family members. The individual dwellings of mud, wood, and thatch are round in some regions and rectangular in others.

Each building in a compound has a specific purpose. There are spaces for cooking, sleeping, storage, worship, domestic animals, and sometimes for burying the dead. The buildings and outer walls of a compound surround a central courtyard, which is usually the main working place for the family.

Many African towns and cities are patterned after the basic rural compound. Many cities were originally enclosed by walls made of wood, earth, or stone, depending on the available natural resources. Markets and palaces of rulers surrounded the large central square. In North Africa, towns with narrow twisting streets and tightly clustered homes were often protected by a massive outer wall and defensive fort called a Casbah.

In some cultures, belief in a spiritual life after death focused architectural efforts on creating elaborate monuments and tombs. Among the most famous structures on the African continent are the great temples and PYRAMIDS of ancient Egypt. Built for Egyptian rulers believed to be

gods, these tombs were constructed of massive stones and designed to last forever. The ancient AKSUM culture in what is now Ethiopia and Eritrea once built monuments on a similar scale, including pillars carved in the shape of multistory buildings that towered over 100 feet high. These remain standing today.

In contrast to these monumental structures is the temporary housing of hunting-gathering societies and some pastoralists*. Their architecture often consists solely of tents and other shelters that can be assembled and taken apart quickly. Built of various lightweight materials, such as wood, grasses, and hides, these portable structures accommodate the nomadic lifestyle of their inhabitants.

* **pastoralist** someone who herds livestock

Environment and Building Materials. The environments found in Africa range from harsh deserts to tropical rain forests to temperate savannas*. The architecture of each region is directly related to its environment and the building materials available.

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

In tropical regions of heavy rainfall, people typically build homes with sloping roofs that allow water to run off easily. Numerous openings in exterior and interior walls permit outside air to pass through a building and cool it. Because vegetation is often dense in such regions, common construction materials include wood and plant matter, such as leaves and vines. By contrast, in hot, dry regions where timber is scarce, dried mud or bricks are often used for buildings. Thick walls with few openings help keep out the daytime heat, allowing the interiors to remain relatively cool. In areas that have strong, regular winds from a certain direction, structures are placed to take advantage of the cooling effects of breezes and some walls may be reinforced to withstand storms.

The building materials used in traditional architecture depend largely on a region's resources. In North Africa and along the east African coast, many ancient cities and monuments were made of stone. The Egyptians constructed temples and pyramids of local limestone. The coastal-dwelling Swahili built with blocks of coral. Even today, some settled rural populations in East Africa use stone for houses, grain storage buildings, and the foundations of walls because stone lasts far longer than wood in tropical climates.

In the rainforest regions of Africa, people harvest hardwood for walls, ceilings, roofs, and doors. Some tropical hardwoods are brought to savanna areas, where trees and bushes are scarce. Other common rainforest building materials are bamboo and the flexible roots of trees. Palm fronds, grasses, and vines are woven into mats that are used for walls and roofs and for decoration.

In many parts of Africa, buildings are made of earth. Some people use mud to form cone-shaped or rectangular bricks that are dried or baked until hard. Others build with balls of wet mud. Clay pots and pottery may be employed as paving tiles, gutters, and wall linings.

African builders frequently work with combinations of stone, earth, timber, textiles, and other materials. They top earthen roofs with wooden planks, dry straw, or plant leaves. They reinforce earthen walls and arches with tree roots and bamboo sticks, and they make tents with branches, leather, and textiles.

Symbolism in Architecture

For the Dogon of Mali, each element of architecture—from the individual parts of a house to the entire plan of a village—has symbolic meaning associated with their religious beliefs. Each Dogon community compound, which consists of various buildings, symbolizes a man lying on his side. The hearth, or fireplace, is associated with the man's head. The storerooms represent his arms, the stables his legs, and the central workrooms his belly. The compound as a whole symbolizes a man in the act of procreation, or producing offspring.

The Construction Process. Building in rural Africa has traditionally been a family or even community effort. Many people lend their skills to erect a building. The building process might involve blacksmiths, woodworkers, weavers, and potters. Specific tasks are often assigned according to gender. Usually, men cut and carve wood, mold and shape bricks, and construct the earthen walls of houses. Women may make architectural pottery such as tiles, gutters, and decorative features, carry water to the work site, and apply the finishing coats of plaster or mud on walls, floors, and other surfaces.

In Africa's Islamic cities, however, construction has generally been left to specialized groups of builders and artisans*. Deeply respected, these workers have held a high place in society. Many people have also feared them, believing them to have magical powers. Often Islamic political and military leaders designed the cities. They planned city walls, mosques*, and palaces based on religious principles and the decorations found in the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam.

The construction process in Africa often includes religious rites*. Many peoples perform sacrifices and other ceremonies before, during, and on completion of a building project. Such rites are believed to help ensure that the structure will remain strong and stable and that the life of its occupants will be peaceful and prosperous. Some nomadic groups build a house as part of their marriage ceremony.

Decoration in Architecture. For some African groups, decoration is an important part of a building's construction. The bricks or stones in a wall may be laid so that they form a particular design. The Rozwi people of southern Africa, for example, built intricately patterned stone walls during the 1600s and 1700s. Some groups arrange straw or other grasses in appealing patterns on roofs; others twist branches and plant materials into decorative features. Designs and colors may be woven into roof and wall mats, such as those made by the Kuba people in the Congo.

Decorative elements may also be added to structures after they are built. The most commonly applied surface decoration—used primarily on stone or earthen walls—is dried mud. The mud may be colored with vegetable dyes, carved in bas-relief*, or embedded with pieces of pottery, seashells, or other materials. Architectural decoration is found most frequently on doorways and entrances, around window openings, on exterior walls and interior courtyards, and on the tops of roofs. It may also be used to mark a significant place, such as a hearth or storeroom, or an important building in the community.

The patterns of surface design vary according to ethnic group, religion, and building function. The ancient Egyptians added paintings and carvings to their architecture to tell stories and communicate religious messages. In Islamic communities, buildings are usually adorned with geometric and scriptlike designs because the Muslim religion forbids making pictures of people and animals. In many cultures, certain colors or patterns may hold special symbolic meaning. The HAUSA of northern Nigeria decorate the outside of their homes with bas-relief or painted designs, sometimes including pictures of bicycles and cars to represent high social standing. The NDEBELE of South Africa decorate homes,

* **artisan** skilled crafts worker

* **mosque** Muslim place of worship

* **rite** ceremony or formal procedure

* **bas-relief** type of sculpture in which figures are raised slightly from a flat surface

See color plate 13, vol. 3.

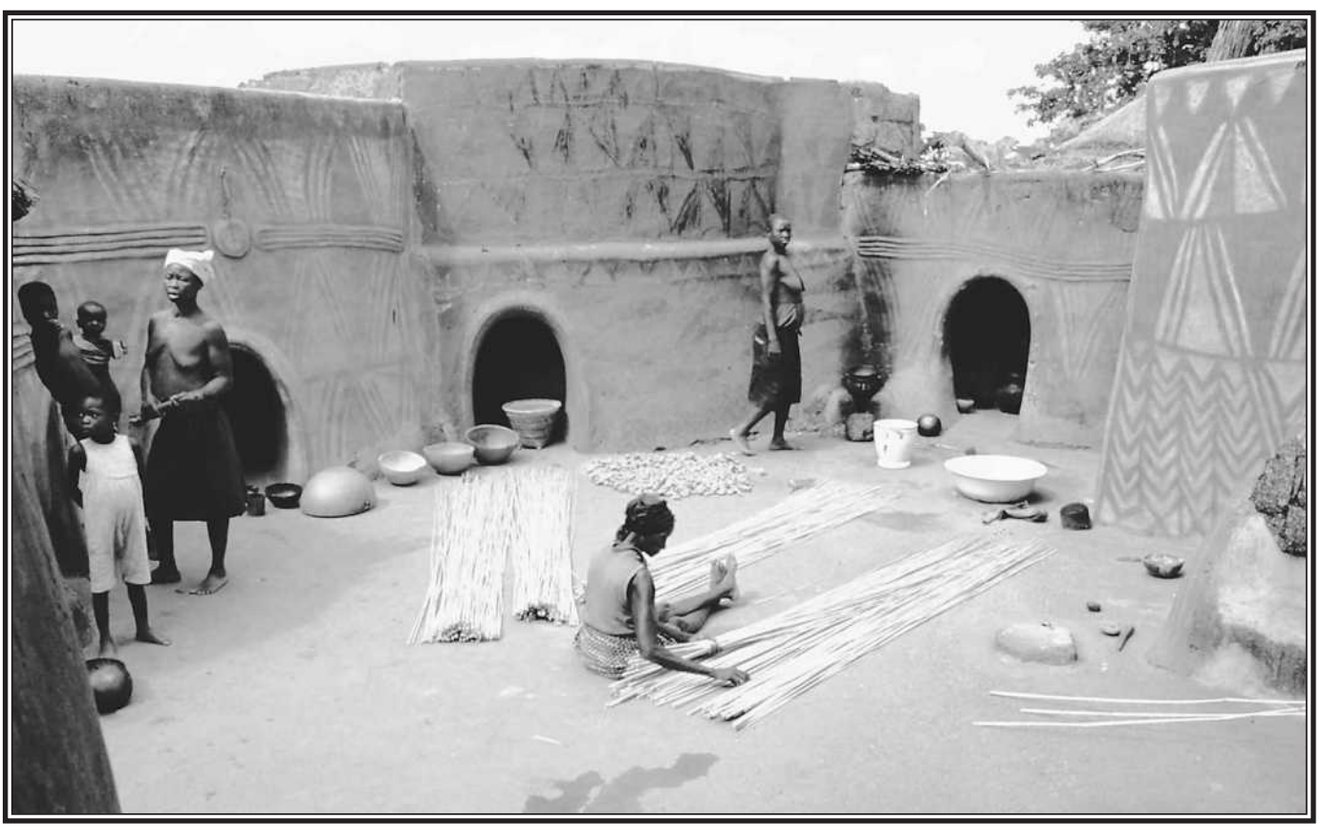
churches, and other buildings with bold and colorful geometric patterns.

EARLY FOREIGN INFLUENCE

Travelers from Europe and Asia have long influenced Africa's architecture. The ancient Mediterranean civilizations of Phoenicia, Greece, and Rome built great cities in North Africa. Later Arabs introduced Islamic architecture to the people of Africa's northern coast. Christianity played a lesser role in the continent's early architecture, although it inspired some unique early churches in northeastern Africa.

Greek and Roman Influence. Settlers and invaders from the around the Mediterranean—particularly the ancient Greeks and Romans—brought their own styles of architecture to Africa. Around 800 B.C., the Phoenicians, a seafaring people from the eastern Mediterranean, built the thriving city of CARTHAGE in what is now Tunisia. The Romans destroyed the original buildings around 150 B.C. Later they rebuilt the city and made it the capital of their African province. The new city boasted an amphitheater, a forum, and miles of aqueducts that carried water to luxurious baths like those in Rome. After Carthage declined, later generations of Tunisian builders reused its stones in surrounding cities.

This enclosed village in Ghana combines shelter for family groups with a courtyard for activities such as weaving mats.





This fortress in central Morocco was built on a hillside overlooking the valley below. It includes square towers and an ornamental roofline, features common to many other North African buildings.

The Greeks constructed another of North Africa's great cities, ALEXANDRIA, in ancient Egypt. Founded in 332 B.C. by Alexander the Great, the city included palaces, parks, and temples in the Greek style. Among its most famous buildings were a vast library and a museum, which served as an institute for higher learning. A towering lighthouse with a fire at its peak guided ships into Alexandria's harbor and was considered one of the wonders of the ancient world.

Islamic and Christian Influence. By the 900s, Arabs were spreading Islamic culture and architecture along the coasts of northern and eastern Africa. Mosques are among the most striking forms of Islamic architecture in Africa. They are often decorated with elaborately carved stucco and wood and with detailed tile and glass mosaics. Built around a courtyard and a prayer hall, many mosques feature horseshoe-shaped archways, multiple domes, arched ceilings, and up to six minarets—tall, thin spires from which Muslims are called to prayer. North African mosques are particularly ornate.

Although mosques in Africa are distinctly Islamic in function and decoration, they include elements of indigenous architecture. In Cairo, mosque builders used an ancient Egyptian technique to carve finely detailed decorations directly into the surface of stone. In East Africa, Swahili palaces and mosques are constructed of coral blocks. Several early West African mosques, including one in TIMBUKTU in Mali, are made in the local fashion using mud strengthened with numerous wooden poles that poke out from the exterior walls. The ends of the

poles serve as a scaffold for workers to climb up and repair the mud walls when they are damaged by heavy downpours during the rainy season.

Although Christianity spread to Africa in the first centuries A.D., it had little effect on African architecture until the late 1800s when European-style churches were introduced. One exception is the churches built in what is now Ethiopia and Eritrea. In the 1200s indigenous Christians of that area carved massive churches out of solid rock. The style of these churches owed something to the carved monuments of the earlier Aksum culture. Another uniquely African style of Christian architecture developed in the Gondar and Lake Tana regions of Ethiopia in the late 1500s. Churches built in this area were round and were surrounded by long walkways covered with arches and walls topped by towers.

COLONIAL ARCHITECTURE

When Europeans began to colonize Africa in the 1500s, a new style of African architecture was born—colonial architecture. From government and commercial buildings to the houses of wealthy Africans, colonial architecture reflected the political and economic relations between



Some ancient mosques in West Africa, like this one in Djenné, Mali, were built of hardened mud.

Europeans and Africans. It was primarily an expression of European power and authority.

European Influence. Although many European nations played a role in colonizing Africa, no clear distinction can be seen in the architecture of their colonies. Rather, these colonial powers produced a common style with variations that reflected local African building traditions, climate and natural resources, and political developments.

Some of the earliest colonial architecture appeared in West Africa. From the 1500s to the 1800s "Portuguese-style" houses were constructed along the West African coast. Rectangular in shape, these buildings had a whitewashed exterior and a veranda—a long, roofed porch. In Saint-Louis (in present-day Senegal), the first colonial capital of French West Africa, merchants built houses with interior courtyards and second-floor porches. During the mid-1800s, European missionaries in West Africa constructed two-story buildings with a porch and covered passageway.

During the late 1800s, Brazil, a former colony of Portugal, lent its own flavor to colonial architecture in West Africa. Wealthy middle-class residents of African and Brazilian ancestry built lavish dwellings with the ground floor devoted to business and the upper stories for living quarters. They featured highly decorated facades—building fronts—that proclaimed the wealth of their owners.

See color plate 11, vol. 3.

The Dutch and British had an influence on the colonial architecture of South and East Africa. Dutch colonial houses combined thatched, or straw-covered, roofs and white plastered walls with ornate gables. When the British took over the region in the early 1800s, they replaced these simple houses with a grander style of architecture that featured fancy facades. British colonial-style buildings were one or two stories tall with encircling porches. Some were made of prefabricated materials, and most had roofs covered with sheets of metal.

Common Characteristics. By the late 1800s a formal colonial style had developed in Africa. This style was also found in India, Southeast Asia, the West Indies, and other European colonial areas. The typical residential structure was a two-story building raised on pillars. Doors and windows were aligned to take full advantage of air currents, and a veranda surrounded the building on both levels. The veranda existed in West Africa before the arrival of Europeans, who readily adopted it for their own use because it created a shaded living area open to cooling breezes.

Government and administrative buildings, located in the capital cities of African colonies, had an important role in colonial architecture. Built to reflect colonial power and prestige, such buildings were large and impressive. They included various durable materials such as stone and hardwoods that were meant to last a long time.

MODERNIZATION

Since the colonial period, foreign design and technology have continued to influence architecture in Africa. Colonial policies, urban growth,

migration, and Western technology encouraged the introduction of new building materials, systems of construction, and building functions. In many rural areas, however, the basic forms of traditional architecture have remained relatively unchanged. But now instead of using grasses and palm leaves for roofing, African builders often replace these natural materials with sheets of iron or aluminum. Instead of sun-dried brick, they may use concrete blocks.

The impact of foreign cultures and new materials is especially evident in cities. Many African nations have adopted the universal concrete and steel urban architecture, submerging much of the unique character of African architecture. However, some nations, such as Morocco, have taken steps to promote the use of local design and decoration in new buildings. The character of indigenous architecture also continues to change rapidly, as professionally trained architects become increasingly involved in developing new forms of architecture. (*See also* **Art, Cities and Urbanization, Crafts, Colonialism in Africa, Roman Africa**.)

Armies

See ***Warfare.***

Art

Each of the hundreds of different cultures in Africa has its own artistic traditions and its own ideas of what is beautiful or important. Variations in the style and form of artworks, as well as in the materials used to produce them, reflect such factors as a region's geography and climate, its social customs, and the available technology. Of course, the skill and tastes of individual artists—and the purpose for which the work is created—also play a role in shaping the final product.

OVERVIEW OF AFRICAN ART

African art takes many forms, from sculpture and paintings to masks, textiles, baskets, jewelry, and utensils. Artistic style also covers a wide range, from lifelike representations of people or animals to abstract* geometric patterns. The Yoruba of Nigeria and the Bamileke of Cameroon, for example, believe that sculptures should resemble their subjects and must also show certain ideal qualities such as youth and beauty. The Bambara of Mali favor geometric shapes and idealized images over realistic portrayals of people or animals.

In sub-Saharan* Africa, many art objects are created to serve a particular purpose. These purposes include dealing with the problems of life, marking the passage from childhood to adulthood, communicating with spirits, and expressing basic beliefs. Artists carve figures to honor ancestors, rulers, and gods. They make masks for use in rituals* and funerals and for entertainment. They design jewelry and body painting that often function as a sign of wealth, power, and social position.

In North Africa, Islamic* beliefs restrict the creation of images of living things. As a result, artists have applied their skills to decorative arts such as carpet weaving and calligraphy, or ornamental writing.

* **abstract** in art, referring to designs or shapes that do not represent a recognizable object or person

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

Twins in Life and Art

Among the Yoruba of Nigeria, small carved figures play a significant role in family life. When one child in a pair of twins dies in infancy, the mother asks an artist to make a figure representing the deceased child. Carved in wood, the figure has hair, often dyed a rich blue-black. The mother cares for the figure as if it were a real child, providing it with food, expensive clothing, and jewelry until the surviving twin is old enough to take care of it.

Calligraphy can be seen on buildings, household items, sacred books, and other places.

Meaning in African Art. The subject of a work of art and the way in which it is made often have an influence on its meaning. In some cases, objects of great social and ritual significance have to be assembled according to certain procedures. Following the rules ensures that the piece will be filled with the appropriate "power." If the rules are broken, the artwork loses its power and becomes an ordinary object. In other cases, the power is given to the object after it is completed.

Some objects serve as a base for materials that add to their significance. For example, when a carver makes a mask, village elders may contribute medicines or herbs to give the mask power. The resulting piece is considered to have a personality of its own.

Design and decoration play a major role in the meaning of an object. An artist may make a mask large to indicate that it is important and add a prominent forehead to suggest that the mask is swollen with spiritual power. Certain patterns have particular significance, perhaps standing for water, the moon, the earth, or other ideas. Objects that represent spirits or spiritual powers are often abstract because the things they represent are abstract. Figures that represent living rulers tend to be more realistic to make it possible to recognize the individual's features. Some objects include symbols that represent powerful animals.

In one type of African art, forms that have known meanings are used in creating images of figures and ideas. The purpose is to portray rulers or ancestors as superhuman and, at the same time, to communicate a sense of permanence. Another category of art includes sculptures and masks that represent the visible world but refer as well to an unseen world behind them. These objects may be used in activities such as healing ceremonies and divination*.

* **divination** practice that looks into the future, usually by supernatural means

A third type of African art consists of everyday objects, such as spoons, pots, doors, cloths, and so on. Some of these items have elaborate decorations, such as the intricate human faces carved into the handles of wooden ladles from Ivory Coast. Often reserved for the wealthy, these objects can also be markers of social position.

Collecting African Art. Europeans began collecting African artworks as early as the 1600s, and by the 1800s interest in these objects was high. However, the first African pieces brought to Europe were regarded as curiosities rather than works of art. While admiring the workmanship, some people considered African art to be "primitive" and without artistic value. Nevertheless, by the end of the 1800s many European museums had acquired African pieces for their collections, usually to show everyday life in their countries' colonies.

African works did not attract much attention as art until the 1920s, when interest focused mainly on sculptures in wood and bronze. Since the 1950s Western collectors, scholars, and museums have come to recognize more and more African objects as valuable works of art. Prices of these works have risen accordingly.

In the early years, European museums often displayed African objects with exhibits of animals, rather than with other works of art. Today,

Power Figures

Carved figures or other objects thought to have magical power (sometimes called fetishes) are found in societies in many parts of Africa, including the Kongo and the Fang. The figures can take various forms, from representations of ancestors or other humans to images of real or imaginary animals. No matter what they represent, most of the figures contain special ritual substances to give them their "power." These substances—often blood, vegetable matter, minerals, or parts of animals—are placed in a cavity inside the figure or attached somewhere on its body.

museums present African pieces in their art collections. Furthermore, collectors now understand that, although individual works are not signed, many African artists are well known in the continent by name and reputation.

Art collecting has also changed in Africa. In the past, Africans sometimes threw objects away when they were thought to have lost their power. Without a specific function, the items had little value. Recently, however, more Africans have begun to collect works of art and a number of museums have been established on the continent with collections of African art.

Recent African Art. Over the centuries, African art has changed with the times. Not surprisingly, modern African society and culture are reflected in the recent work of African artists. Some of the religious rituals and other traditional activities for which African art was created no longer exist. Furthermore, new traditions, such as those connected to the practice of Christianity, have been introduced. Some artists have combined African ideas and Christian themes in their work. Others have produced pieces with African motifs* and designs that are not intended for use in rituals. Yet, though much of the current art reflects modern concerns and issues, traditional art forms continue to play a meaningful role in the lives of ordinary people.

Styles of art change as well. Traditional designs often appear in new ways, such as using body painting designs in paintings on canvas. Perhaps one of the most notable features of recent African art is its role in the modern marketplace. In many places, an art industry has developed to produce objects specifically for Western tourists and collectors. Such "tourist" art may include copies of older art forms as well as contemporary designs.

* **motif** in art and music, repeated theme or design

SCULPTURE

See color plate 8, vol. 3.

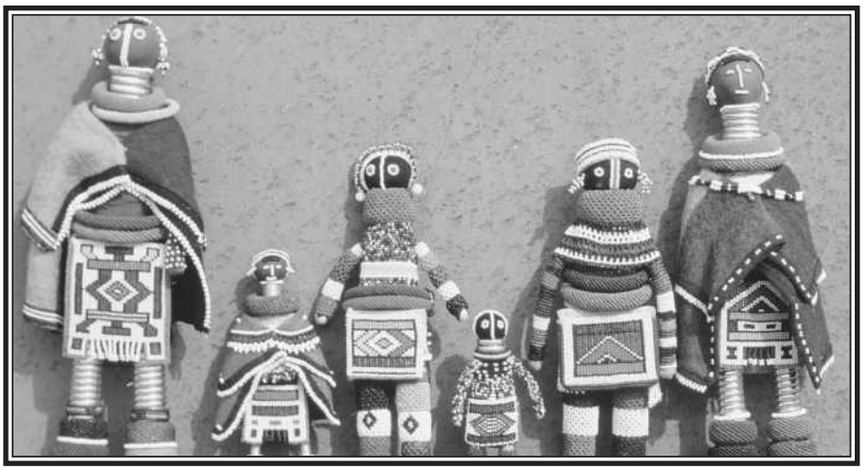
For sculpture, perhaps sub-Saharan Africa's greatest art form, the most commonly used materials are wood and clay and metals such as iron, bronze, and gold. Unfortunately, wood decomposes and is easily destroyed, so few pieces of early wooden sculpture have survived.

West Africa. Sculpture is one of the major art forms in West Africa. Scholars divide the artistic traditions of the region into two broad geographical areas: the western Sudan and the Guinea Coast. Although some common themes appear in the art of these areas, the most striking feature of West African sculpture is its diversity.

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

The western Sudan, a savanna* region that extends across West Africa, includes several well-defined sculptural traditions. Figures from this region often have elongated bodies, angular shapes, and facial features that represent an ideal rather than an individual. Many of the figures are used in religious rituals, and they often have dull surfaces encrusted with materials placed on them in ceremonial offerings.

The Mande-speaking peoples of the western Sudan create wooden figures with broad, flat surfaces. The body, arms, and legs are shaped like cylinders, while the nose may be a large vertical slab. Artists often burn



These beaded dolls made by the Ndebele people in South Africa include items worn by married Ndebele women and were originally fertility charms.

patterns of scars—a common type of body decoration—into the surface of figures with a hot blade. Scar patterns also consist of large geometric shapes. The Mande wooden figures are usually dark brown and black.

Another important sculptural tradition of this region is that of the Dogon people of Mali. Much Dogon sculpture is linked to ancestor worship. The Dogon carve figures meant to house the spirits of the dead, which they place on family shrines. Their designs feature raised geometric patterns, such as black-and-white checkerboards and groups of circles in red, white, and black.

The Guinea Coast extends along the Atlantic Ocean from Guinea-Bissau through central Nigeria and Cameroon. Sculptural figures of this region tend to be more realistic in design than those from other parts of West Africa. The arms, legs, and bodies of figures are curved and smooth. Detailed patterns representing body scars—also typical of this region—rise above the surrounding surface. Many figures are adorned with rings around the neck. A common form of body adornment, the rings are symbols of prosperity and well-being.

Two noteworthy sculptural traditions of the Guinea Coast are those of the Asante (Ashanti) and the Fon. The Asante carve dolls that represent their idea of feminine beauty. They also produce swords and staffs, covered in gold foil, for royal officials. The Fon people are known for their large copper and iron sculptures of Gun, the god of iron and war.

The artistic traditions of Nigeria are very old indeed. Among the earliest sculptures from northern Nigeria are realistic clay figures of animals made by the Nok culture as early as the 400s B.C. The human figures produced by the Nok, with their tube-shaped heads, bodies, arms, and legs, are less realistic. The ancient kingdom of Benin in Nigeria was renowned for its magnificent brass sculptures. Dating from about the A.D. 1400s, these include images of groups of animals, birds, and people.

See color plate 6, vol. 3.

Another important sculptural tradition is that of Ife, an ancient city of the Yoruba of southwestern Nigeria. Between A.D. 1100 and 1450, the people of Ife were creating realistic figures in brass and clay, and some of these probably represent royalty. Life-sized Yoruba brass heads from this time may have played a role in funeral ceremonies. Yoruba carvings typically portray human figures in a naturalistic style. The sculptural tra-

Art Schools

In many African cities—including Cairo, Johannesburg, and Addis Ababa in Ethiopia—artists today can study at formal art schools. Often associated with universities, these schools bring artists together to share ideas and learn artistic skills.

Painter Uche Okeke helped develop the art program at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka in the 1970s. The school became a center for artists who include traditional Igbo forms, known as uli, *in their work. Using media such as ink, watercolor, and oil paint, the Nsukka artists create images that deal with political and economic conditions, explore human relationships, and depict the beauty of the Nigerian landscape.*

ditions of Ife are still followed, but individual cults* often have their own distinct styles.

Central Africa. Central Africa, a vast area of forest and savanna that stretches south from Cameroon to Angola and west to the Democratic Republic of Congo, contains a great diversity of cultures and arts. Yet, in most cases, the differences in artistic styles are so striking that experts have no trouble identifying the area where an object was produced.

A number of groups in Central Africa have ancient sculptural traditions, and some of the most impressive carving in Africa comes from this region. Pieces range from the wooden heads made by the Fang people to the royal figures carved by the Kuba to guard boxes of ancestral relics*. The Kuba figures are decorated with geometric patterns and objects symbolizing each king's accomplishments. The Kuta-Mahongwe work in a more abstract style to produce guardian figures covered with sheets of brass or copper.

The varied sculpture of Central Africa does have some characteristic features, such as heart-shaped faces that curve inward and patterns of circles and dots. Some groups prefer rounded, curved shapes, while others favor geometric, angular forms. Specific details are often highlighted. Particularly striking are the richly carved hairdos and headdresses, intricate scar patterns and tattoos, and necklaces and bracelets. Although wood is the primary material used in carving, the people of this region also create figures from ivory, bone, stone, clay, and metal.

Eastern Africa. Although sculpture is not a major art form in eastern Africa, a variety of sculptural traditions can be found in the region. An unusual sculptural form in some parts of eastern Africa is the pole, which is carved in human shape and decorated. Usually associated with death, pole sculptures are placed next to graves or at the entrances to villages. Among the Konso of Ethiopia, for example, the grave of a wealthy, important man may be marked by a group of carved wooden figures representing the deceased, his wives, and the people or animals he killed during his lifetime.

Sculpture is mainly associated with the dead in parts of Madagascar as well. Figures are often placed on tombs or in shrines dedicated to ancestors. The tombs of prominent Mahafaly individuals may be covered with as many as 30 wooden sculptures. Carved from a single piece of wood, each sculpture stands about 61/2 feet high. The lower parts are often decorated with geometric forms, while the tops are carved with figures of animals, people, and various objects.

Southern Africa. Sculpture does not have a particularly strong tradition in southern Africa. The oldest known clay figures from South Africa, dating from between A.D. 400 and 600, have cylindrical heads, some with human features and some with a combination of human and animal features.

Among the more notable carved objects found in southern Africa are wooden headrests in various styles from geometric designs to more realistic carvings of animal figures. Some headrests were buried with their owners, and some were handed down from one generation to the next.

* **cult** group bound together by devotion to a particular person, belief, or god

* **relics** pieces of bone, possessions, or other items belonging to a saint or sacred person

MASKS

Masks are one of the most important and widespread art forms in sub-Saharan Africa. They may be used in initiation ceremonies, such as that marking the passage from childhood to adulthood. Masks also serve as symbols of power to enforce the laws of society.

See color plate 2, vol. 1.

Masks are usually worn as disguises in ceremonies and rituals, along with a costume of leaves, cloth, feathers, and other materials. Although masks may represent either male or female spirits, they are almost always worn by men. The person wearing the mask in the ceremony is no longer treated as himself or herself but as the spirit that the mask represents.

In addition to face masks (which just cover the face), there are helmet masks (which cover all or most of the head) and crest masks (worn on top of the head like a headdress). Made of wood, clay, metal, leather, fabric, or other materials, masks may be painted and decorated with such things as animal skins, feathers, beads, and shells.

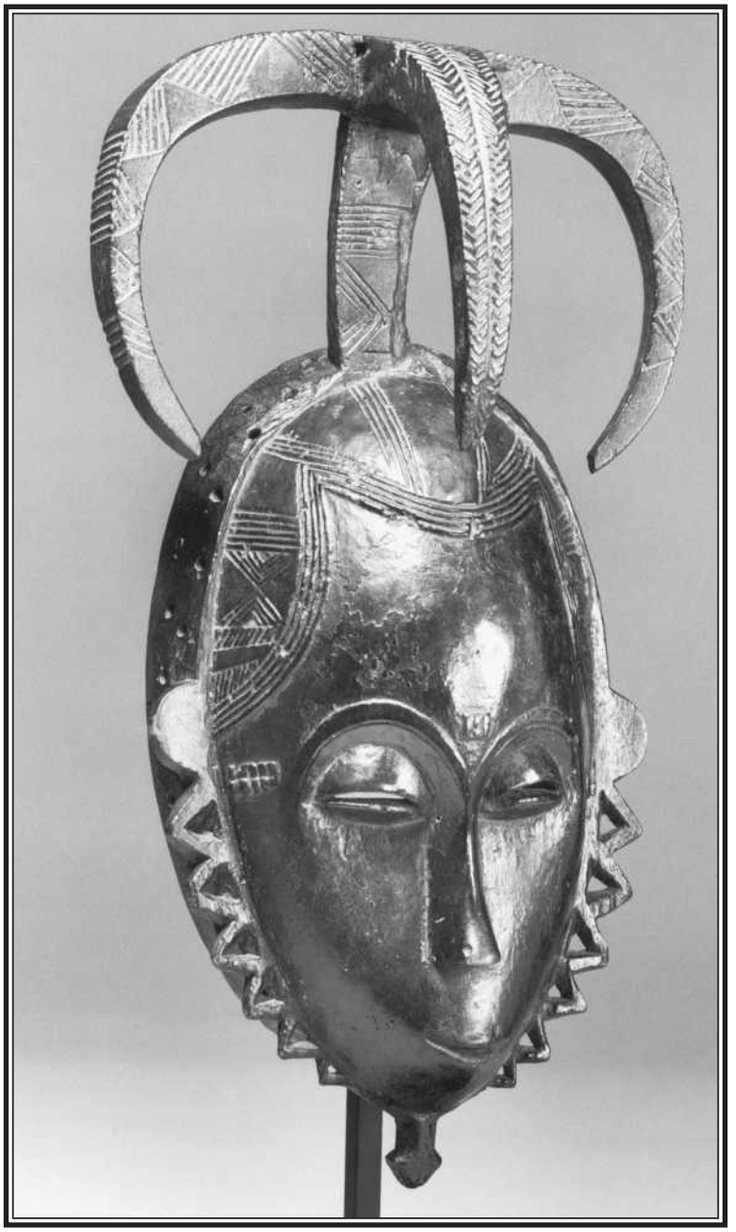
West Africa. Many different forms and styles of masks can be found in West Africa. The Bambara people of Mali have specific masks for their various male societies. Many of these masks represent animals that stand for mythical characters. The masks are decorated with real antelope horns, porcupine quills, bird skulls, and other objects. The characteristics of several animals are combined in masks of the Senufo people of Ivory Coast.

Masks play a role in rituals and ceremonies related to death or ancestors. Once a year, in elaborate performances honoring their ancestors, the Yoruba of Nigeria put on masks made of colorful fabrics and small carved wooden heads. In other parts of Nigeria, masks representing both human and animal characters are worn at the funerals of important elders as a way of honoring the deceased.

The IGBO people of Nigeria have two types of masks to mark the transition from childhood to adulthood. Dark masks represent "male qualities" such as power and strength, prosperity, and impurity, while delicate white masks symbolize "female qualities" of beauty, gentleness, and purity. Among the Mende people of Sierra Leone, elaborate black helmet masks representing the Mende ideals of feminine beauty are used in rituals initiating young girls into womanhood. This is the only case of women wearing masks in Africa.

Central and Eastern Africa. Many Central African masks signify rank and social position, representing the authority and privilege of kings, chiefs, and other individuals. Some also function as symbols of identity for specific groups. While certain masks are considered the property of individuals, others are owned collectively by the group. Used in a variety of situations, masks may inspire fear, fight witchcraft, or entertain. As elsewhere in Africa, many masks are linked with initiation and funeral rituals.

Among the most notable masks of Central Africa are large helmet masks with figures of humans, animals, and scenes on top. Too heavy to be carried or worn, they are displayed during important ceremonies. The



The wooden mask shown here was carved by the Yaure of the Ivory Coast. The Yaure often use fine patterns of lines to indicate beards, hairlines, jewelry, and scars.

masks of the Pende people of Angola and Congo (Kinshasa) are among the most dramatic works of art in Africa. These large helmet masks have faces with angular patterns and heavy triangular eyelids. Topped by plant fibers that represent hair, they are thought to possess mysterious powers. The Pende make smaller versions of these masks in ivory or wood for use as amulets*. In nearby Zambia, various materials are used to create ceremonial masks. The Mbundu work in wood, and the Luvale and Chokwe attach pieces of painted bark cloth to a wicker frame.

Masks do not play an important role in the art of eastern Africa. However, the Makonde of Mozambique and southeastern Tanzania create distinctive face masks and body masks.

* **amulet** small object thought to have supernatural or magical powers

PAINTING

Painting on canvas is a recent development in Africa. Although Africans have always painted, they have done so primarily on rock surfaces or on the walls of houses and other buildings. Africans also apply paint to sculpted figures, masks, and their own bodies.

See color plate 2, vol. 2.

The earliest known African paintings are on rocks in southern Africa. Made by the KHOISAN people about 20,000 years ago, these rock paintings portray human and animal figures, often in hunting scenes. The paintings may have had ritual or social significance, though no one knows for sure. Other ancient rock paintings have been found in the Sahara desert in North Africa. Dating from as early as the 4000s B.C., these paintings also portray animals and human figures. The strongest traditions of rock painting are found in eastern and southern Africa.

Eastern Africa. The people of eastern Africa have traditionally painted and marked their bodies in various ways. Such decoration has been considered a sign of beauty as well as a form of artistic expression. Some of it is temporary, as in the case of body painting with various natural pigments and other coloring agents. The patterns and designs used often signify group identity, social status, and passage through important stages in life.

See color plate 3, vol. 3.

Other forms of painting can be found in Ethiopia. Christian influence has been strong in Ethiopia for centuries, and around the A.D. 1100s Ethiopian artists began painting religious scenes on the walls of churches. Since the 1600s, Ethiopians have also produced religious pictures on canvas, wood panels, and parchment.

Traditions of painting are found in several other areas of eastern Africa as well. The Dinka and Nuer people of southern Sudan, for example, paint pictures of cattle and people on the walls of huts. Members of the secret snake charmer society of the Sukuma people in Tanzania decorate the interior walls of their meetinghouses with images of humans, snakes, and mythological figures. The LUO of western Kenya paint geometric designs on fishing boats, and the Mahafaly of Madagascar paint scenes on the sides of tombs.

Southern Africa. Wall painting on the interiors or exteriors of buildings is an important art form in southern Africa. Some very striking examples can be found in this region. Among the best known are those of the NDEBELE of South Africa and Zimbabwe. Almost exclusively the work of women, these paintings were traditionally done in natural earth colors using bold geometric shapes and symmetrical patterns. In recent years, Ndebele women have also used commercial paints, and their designs have become more varied, incorporating lettering and objects such as lightbulbs, as well as abstract designs.

See color plate 15, vol. 3.

DECORATIVE ARTS

See color plate 8, vol. 4.

The decorative arts include such items as textiles, jewelry, pottery, and basketry. While viewed as crafts in some Western cultures, these objects



North African artists use calligraphy to decorate buildings and a variety of household items.

See color plate 12, vol. 3.

See color plate 9, vol. 3.

* **raffia** type of palm used for weaving and basketry

can also be seen as works of art because of the care and level of skill that goes into their creation.

Many useful objects are carved from wood or other hard materials and then decorated. The SWAHILI of eastern Africa used ivory and ebony (a hard wood) to build elaborate "chairs of power" with footrests and removable backs. In West Africa, some Nigerian artisans make musical instruments and food containers from round fruits known as gourds. The outer surfaces of the gourds are covered with delicately carved and painted geometric designs.

African artists create jewelry for adornment, as symbols of social position, and even to bring good health and luck. They use materials such as gold, silver, and various types of beads to make necklaces, bracelets, crowns, rings, and anklets. In the KALAHARI DESERT in southern Africa, artisans fashioned ornaments with beads made from glass or ostrich eggshell. In West Africa the Asante are famous for their gold jewelry and gold-handled swords.

The Asante are also skilled weavers, known for their kente cloth—richly colored cotton or silk fabrics. Many groups of people in western and central Africa have developed their own weaving traditions, using particular types of looms and decorative techniques such as embroidery, patchwork, painting, stenciling, or tie-dyeing. Weavers use cotton, wool, wild silk, raffia*, or synthetic threads to create their designs. In Niger, the Zerma weave large cotton covers in vivid red and black patterns. The Mandjak of Senegal produce magnificently colorful cloth of synthetic silk, rayon, or lurex fibers.

In North Africa, one of the most important decorative art forms is calligraphy. Calligraphy has special significance for Muslims because they consider the written word a sacred symbol of Islamic beliefs. In addi-

See color plate 13, vol. 3.

tion, because of the restrictions on creating images of human beings, artists turn to calligraphy to decorate their work. Calligraphy is found on buildings throughout North Africa and on many objects used in daily life. Carved in wood and stone, painted on walls and pottery, burned into leather, woven into cloth, or shaped into jewelry, calligraphy appears in a wide variety of materials and styles. Geometric designs or flowing patterns of lines and curves resembling flowers, leaves, vines, and even animals often accompany the calligraphy. These designs are always highly stylized, not realistic in form.

Rugs are another major art form in North Africa. The production of intricate hand-knotted rugs began to flourish in Egypt in the 1400s under the Muslim Mamluk rulers. Early rugs featuring a central design surrounded by border elements sometimes contained as many as six colors. Woven carpets are produced in many areas of North Africa, including Sudan and Morocco, often by groups of BERBERS. (*See also* **Architecture, Body Adornment and Clothing, Crafts, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Festivals and Carnivals, Houses and Housing, Initiation Rites, Masks and Masquerades, Religion and Ritual, Rock Art, Spirit Possession, Witchcraft and Sorcery**.)

Asante

The Asante (Ashanti) are the largest and most powerful of a cluster of AKAN chiefdoms of southern GHANA and IVORY COAST. Originating around Lake Bosumtwi, the Asante migrated to the area around the town of Tafo in the early 1600s. Around 1700, Chief Osei Tutu made alliances with several surrounding kingdoms to form the Asante Union. Included in the union were the Mampong, Bekwai, Kokofu, Dwaben, and Nsuta people. It is legend that Osei Tutu, aided by Okomfu Anokye, established the Golden Stool as the traditional symbol of Asante unity, to be held by the Asante ruler. The stool is kept at the capital city of Kumasi.

See color plate 9, vol. 1.

By the early 1800s the Asante had expanded toward the Atlantic coast, threatening British control over trade there. Conflicts occurred with British troops, who burned Kumasi in 1874 and sent several important Asante into exile. In 1902 the British made the Asante state part of their colonial empire. Although they allowed the re-creation of the Asante Union in 1935, it became part of the Gold Coast, as Ghana was then called.

There are about three million Asante, most of whom make their living from agriculture. Their main products are gold, cocoa, palm oil, timber, bauxite, and rubber. Many Asante are highly educated and hold important positions in Ghana's government, businesses, and religious institutions. The Asante practice various religions, including Christianity, Islam, and traditional religions; most combine different forms of belief and worship. Of the approximately 150,000 Asante who are Muslim, the majority follow the Sunni school of the Maliki tradition, while a minority believe in the Shafi'i rite. Family inheritance is determined by matrilineal descent. (*See also* **Christianity in Africa, Islam in Africa**.)

Asantewa, Yaa

ca. 1832–1921
Asante queen

* **siege** attempt to conquer a fortress or town by surrounding it with troops and cutting it off from supplies

Yaa Asantewa was queen of the ASANTE town of Edweso, located in present-day GHANA. In 1900 she led a three-month siege* against British troops in the Asante capital of Kumasi. The British had seized Kumasi four years earlier in an attempt to extend their control of the country, then known as the Gold Coast. They forced a group of Asante chiefs and elders, including Asantewa's grandson, to leave their land.

During this conflict, the Asante hid the Golden Stool, the sacred symbol of Asante kingship. When British governor Sir Frederick Hodgson arrived in Kumasi in 1900, he demanded payment from the Asante as well as surrender of the Golden Stool. These demands led to an uprising and siege by Asantewa and leaders of the surrounding Asante towns. The British eventually broke the siege and exiled Asantewa to the SEYCHELLES, where she died 21 years later. (*See also* **Colonialism in Africa**.)

ASHANTI

See *Asante*.

Askiya Muhammad I

(?)–1528
Ruler of the Songhai Empire

* **pilgrimage** journey to a shrine or sacred place

Askiya Muhammad I was a statesman and military leader who ruled the Songhai Empire of West Africa for more than 30 years. During his reign Muhammad not only expanded the empire, he also reorganized it and transformed it into a Muslim kingdom. He is said to have been a nephew of the Songhai emperor Sunni Ali Ber. Soon after Sunni Ali's death, Muhammad attacked and defeated the new emperor, Sunni Baru. He then gave himself the title Askiya. Two years later Muhammad made a pilgrimage* to Mecca, and when he returned in 1497 he made Islam the official religion of the Songhai Empire.

Muhammad conquered a wide area of northwestern Africa, and his empire's influence extended even farther. However, his main achievements were organizational. He divided the empire into provinces administered by governors and appointed separate ministers to direct financial affairs, justice, agriculture, and other areas of importance to the state. He also established a permanent army and a fleet of war canoes and placed them under the command of a general and an admiral. The well-run empire became a model for surrounding states.

Muhammad's children brought an end to his successful rule. They fought bitterly over the riches of his empire. In 1528 his eldest son killed Muhammad's new general in chief and exiled Muhammad to an island in the NIGER RIVER. When another son took power in 1537, he called his father back to the capital at Gao, where Muhammad died the following year. His tomb, an earthen pyramid topped by wooden spikes, still stands. It is considered one of the holiest Islamic sites in West Africa. (*See also* **Islam in Africa, Sudanic Empires of Western Africa, Sunni Ali**.)

Asma'u, Nana

1793–1864
Islamic poet and teacher

* **jihad** Muslim holy war
* **caliphate** state in the Muslim empire
* **Sufi** member of a Muslim movement characterized by mysticism and dedication to poverty and prayer

Nana Asma'u, an Islamic teacher in what is now northern Nigeria, was known for her writings and for her work in educating Muslim women. Fluent in Arabic and several African languages, she memorized the entire Muslim holy book, the Qur'an. Her father, Uthman Dan Fodio, was an Islamic ruler who led a jihad* in 1804 in Hausaland. Nana Asma'u later wrote extensively about this jihad.

After her father's death, Nana Asma'u became part of a team that organized a new Muslim community in the Sokoto Caliphate*. She also assisted her brother, Caliph Muhammed Bello, in translating and adapting a work on Sufi* women in verse form. Through her poetry Nana Asma'u reminded the new leaders of the caliphate of their responsibilities to the people. Some of her writings provide a glimpse into the workings of the Muslim community. She is perhaps most fondly remembered for creating an educational network for rural Muslim women that instructed students in their native languages. This network still exists today. (*See also* **Literature**, **Sufism**.)

Axum

See *Aksum*.

Atlas Mountains

The Atlas Mountains are the principal geographic feature of the North African countries of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. They are made up of six mountain ranges—the Anti-Atlas, the High Atlas, the Middle Atlas, the Saharan Atlas, the Tell Atlas, and the Aurés—with high plateaus and plains between them. The mountains run northeast from the Atlantic coast of Morocco to the Mediterranean coast of Tunisia for approximately 1,250 miles.

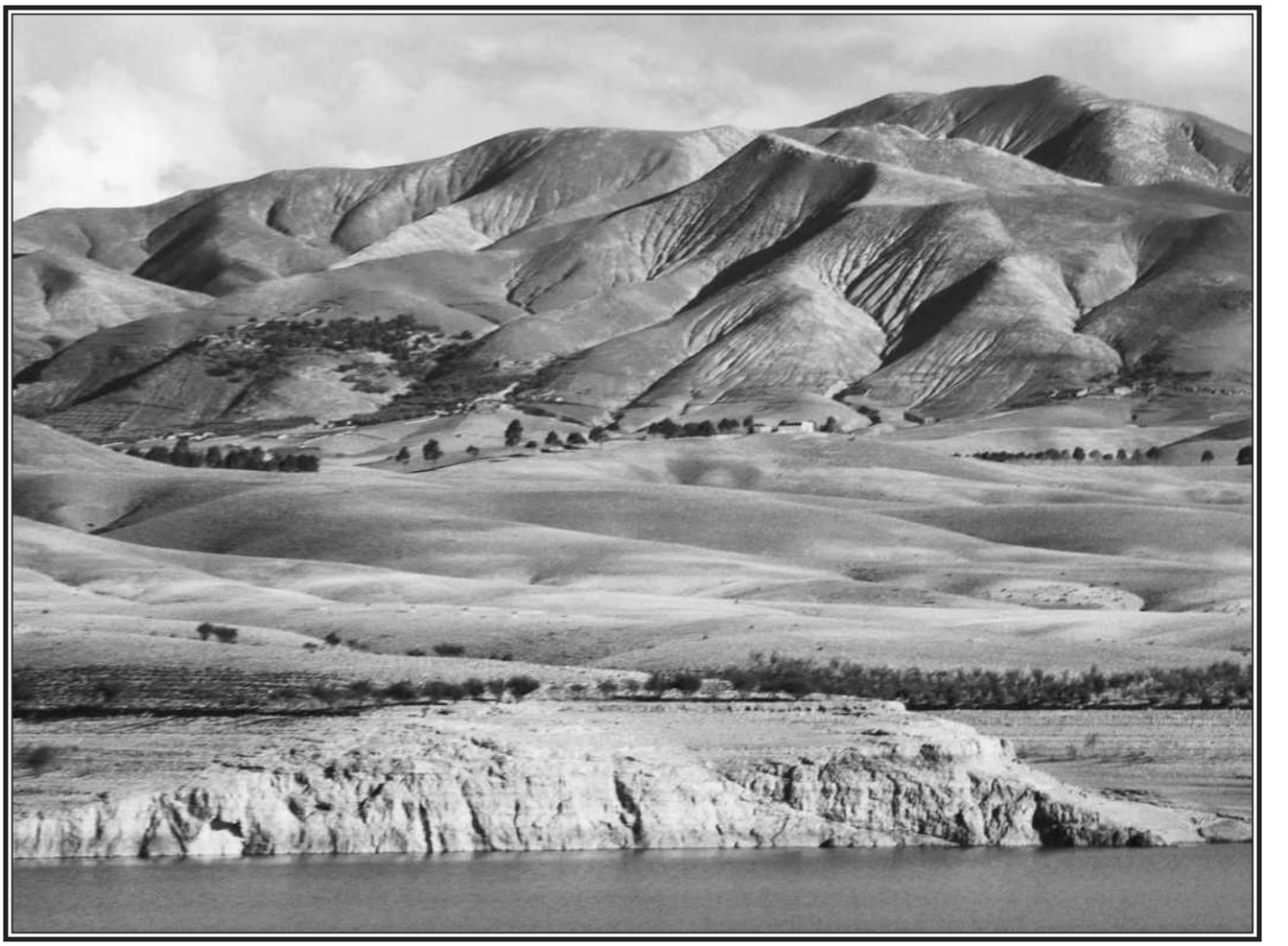
The Atlas Mountains have had a profound effect on North Africa's climate, economic resources, and human history. Separating the coastal lowlands from the Sahara desert in the interior, the ranges prevent the desert heat from reaching the coast. They also trap moist winter storms that blow in from the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea, which causes rainfall along the coast and prevents rain from reaching the interior. In addition, snowfall in the mountains feeds rivers and streams that water the northern parts of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. For these reasons, the northern districts are greener and better suited to agriculture than the flat desert lands found elsewhere in North Africa, and over the centuries people have chosen to settle in these more fertile areas.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

The Atlas Mountains are home to several tribes of Berbers,indigenous* North African people. Because of their isolation in the Atlas Mountains, the Berbers have been able to maintain their languages and customs. Many of them support themselves by farming and raising livestock.

The mountains' name comes from the Greek mythical figure Atlas, who bore the world on his shoulders. The ancient Greeks believed that Atlas lived among the North African peaks. The Arabs who later settled

Atlas Mountains



The Atlas Mountains act as a barrier between the coastal lowlands of western North Africa and the Sahara desert. The mountains trap moisture along the fertile coast and shield the region from the heat of the desert.

in the region called the mountains Jazirat al-Maghrib, "island of the west," because of their contrast to the surrounding desert. Today Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia are sometimes called the MAGHREB or Maghrib.

Azikiwe, Benjamin Nnamdi

1904–1996
President of Nigeria

Benjamin Nnamdi Azikiwe was the first president of the Federal Republic of NIGERIA, after the country won its independence from Britain in 1960. As a young man, Azikiwe left Nigeria to study in the United States. He earned master's degrees in both political science and anthropology. After his studies, he worked for three years as editor of the newspaper *African Morning Post* in Accra, GHANA. Then Azikiwe returned to Nigeria and started the newspaper *West African Pilot*.

Azikiwe launched his political career in 1944, when he joined forces with Herbert MACAULAY, the founder of Nigeria's first political party, the

Nigerian National Democratic Party. Together they organized the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons. Azikiwe became leader of the party (renamed the National Convention of Nigerian Citizens) two years later.

Azikiwe served as premier of Eastern Nigeria under British rule from 1954 to 1959. After Nigeria achieved independence, he served as governor general from 1960 to 1963 and became the nation's first president in 1963. However, Azikiwe was deposed* three years later when the military seized control of Nigeria and banned political parties. After the ban was lifted in 1978, Azikiwe returned to political life as a member of the Nigerian People's Party. By the time he retired from politics in 1986, he had gained wide respect as a political strategist. He was also known as a Nigerian patriot and a champion of human rights. He wrote several books on African politics.

* **depose** to remove from office

Bambara

With a population estimated at 3 million, the Bambara are the largest ethnic group in MALI. Large numbers of them live in northern IVORY COAST as well. They are sometimes called Bamana, the name of the Mande language they speak.

In the 1700s two Bambara kingdoms arose in the region, but they fell to Muslim forces during the 1800s. When the French moved into the area, they destroyed the remaining Bambara armies. By the early 1900s some Bambara had converted to Islam, the religion of their longtime Muslim enemies, as a way of resisting French rule. The process of conversion increased rapidly after World War II, and since the 1980s more than 70 percent of the Bambara have been Muslims.

Many of the Bambara who live in cities hold important positions in politics, business, and professions such as law and medicine. The Bambara of rural areas are mainly farmers, growing staple crops and several cash crops* including peanuts, rice, and cotton. They are renowned as artists and weavers of cloth that is exported around the world. In recent years many Bambara have moved from rural to urban areas to find work as laborers. (*See also* **Islam in Africa**.)

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

Banda, Ngwazi Hastings Kamuzu

1906–
President of Malawi

Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda served as president of MALAWI from 1966 to 1994. His presidency was a time of one-party rule. Born in the British colony of Nyasaland (present-day Malawi), Banda left home at age 17 to study in SOUTH AFRICA. Later he traveled to the United States, where he attended college and medical school.

While practicing medicine in London and GHANA, Banda became involved in his country's politics. He joined the Nyasaland Congress and protested Britain's decision to create a federation linking Nyasaland with the neighboring colonies of Northern and Southern Rhodesia. In 1958 the Congress asked him to come back home.

Banda soon formed his own political party, the Malawi Congress Party (MCP). He was a lively and appealing public figure, and when

Nyasaland won independence as Malawi in 1964, Banda became the country's prime minister. Three years later he was chosen president. In 1971 he changed his title to President for Life and made the MCP the only legal political party in the country. Banda's political opponents were driven into exile, imprisoned, or killed. His foreign policy favored Western governments. At home he sought to modernize Malawi's agriculture and public works, while enforcing a strict moral code on the people. Banda regulated everything from the length of women's skirts to the books people could read.

Despite his harsh rule, Banda was widely respected in Malawi and was nicknamed Ngwazi—meaning savior or conqueror—by the local media. However, he upset many African leaders by supporting South Africa's apartheid* government and by backing guerrilla* rebels in MOZAMBIQUE. In 1991 various groups spoke out against Banda's human rights abuses, further weakening his power. In 1994 Banda reluctantly allowed the first multiparty elections in nearly 30 years and resigned the presidency.

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation in South Africa intended to maintain white control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

BANKING

See *Development, Economic and Social; Money and Banking.*

Bantu Peoples

The Bantu, a large group of related peoples, originated along what is now the border between NIGERIA and CAMEROON and spread throughout central and southern Africa. The term *Bantu* is sometimes used to describe all Africans and African culture in general. But this use of the term is inaccurate; Bantu peoples make up only about a third of Africa's population. Bantu is also the name of the family of related LANGUAGES spoken by these people. Over time, the many Bantu-speaking peoples have become very different from one another.

Bantu Origins. All Bantu languages arose from a single language known as proto-Bantu. About 4000 B.C. the people who spoke this language developed a culture based on the farming of root crops, foraging*, and fishing on the West African coast. Over the years, Bantu became more widely spoken than the languages of the nomadic peoples who lived in the same area. Its spread was probably aided by the unique social organization of the early Bantu, based on a system of cooperation between villages. Every village consisted of several "Houses," and each House formed working relationships with Houses from other villages. This strong but flexible social network may have helped the Bantu migrate across the continent.

* **forage** to hunt or search for food

According to archaeological* evidence, the Bantu migration began sometime after 3000 B.C. One group of Bantu moved southward, reaching southern Cameroon by about 1500 B.C. Within a thousand years the migrants also settled the coast of Congo and the Congo Basin in what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo (CONGO (KINSHASA)). These West Bantu people developed new skills such as ironworking and the

* **archaeological** referring to the study of past human cultures and societies, usually by excavating ruins



These Zulu women of South Africa speak one of the nearly 600 Bantu languages found on the continent.

making of ceramics. They continued to live side-by-side with other peoples, but apparently shared little in the way of culture or technology.

The Interlacustrine Bantu. Long after the West Bantu migration, a second Bantu migration began—this one toward the east. Sometime before 1000 B.C. Bantu groups arrived in the northwestern Great Lakes area in what is now UGANDA. Known as the Interlacustrine* Bantu, these peoples learned new farming methods from neighbors in eastern Africa who spoke Cushitic and Sudanic languages. They raised livestock—particularly cattle—and practiced agriculture, growing grain crops such as sorghum. Bantu women eventually married Sudanic and Cushitic men and raised their children to speak the Bantu language. Between about 500 B.C. and A.D. 800, the Bantu language spread throughout the Great Lakes region.

Two specific developments brought steady prosperity to this region after A.D. 1000. The first was the emergence of plantain farming. The second was pastoralism—a way of life in which cattle were driven from place to place in search of new grazing land. Both plantains (a banana-like fruit) and cattle produced a reliable year-round supply of food, enabling communities to grow in size and complexity. The Bantu founded new settlements, created a new style of pottery, and developed new social and political ties.

* **interlacustrine** between lakes

Bantu communities that practiced pastoralism were particularly influential in the area. Their cattle were a source of moveable wealth. People who owned cattle gained political power by loaning the cattle to neighbors, who were obligated to provide support and assistance to the lender in return. In this way, loaning cattle forged new political relationships and incorporated outsiders in existing political and social groups.

Bantu herding communities also spread their religion as they traveled, introducing new spirits and beliefs into the communities they visited. Their mediums* established new centers of spiritual and political power that competed with and often replaced the worship of local spirits. Between 1000 and 1500 the new forms of economic, political, religious, and social life that arose under Bantu influence completely transformed Africa's Great Lakes region.

* **medium** person called upon to communicate with the spirit world

Later Bantu Cultures. The Interlacustrine Bantu eventually spread east to modern-day KENYA and TANZANIA and south into the present-day countries of ZIMBABWE, BOTSWANA, MOZAMBIQUE, and parts of SOUTH AFRICA. This movement was very rapid and most likely occurred before 200 B.C. As in the west, Bantu languages scattered widely throughout eastern Africa. After the first eastern expansion ended, East Bantu speakers in southeastern Congo (Kinshasa) and ZAMBIA moved westward and joined with West Bantu speakers. The languages in this area show a mixture of East and West Bantu influences.

The most extensive archeological evidence of Bantu culture in eastern and southern Africa dates from about A.D. 400. By this time, cattle were so important in southern Bantu society that villages were erected around a central pen. In Kenya the first towns built by the SWAHILI—another Bantu people—appeared around 750. Swahili settlements soon dotted the Indian Ocean coast as far south as Mozambique. Around the same time, systems of farming and herding arose in Uganda and RWANDA. These regions featured Bantu settlements with fortified central areas that eventually grew into kingdoms after about 1500.

By A.D. 1000, settlements along the Limpopo River had developed into a town called Mapungabwe—the capital of a Bantu kingdom that controlled much of the surrounding territory. After Mapungabwe declined, it was replaced around 1250 by the kingdom of Great Zimbabwe. This powerful empire flourished for almost 200 years by supplying gold and ivory to Swahili traders from the North. Bantu civilizations continued to dominate south and east Africa politically until European colonial governments displaced them in the 1800s.

Today, the Bantu peoples are as diverse as the land they inhabit. Hundreds of societies in central and southern Africa trace their roots to the Bantu, and about 150 million Africans speak one of nearly 600 Bantu languages. Yet regional differences in environment, livelihood, and history have made each Bantu society and tongue unique. The Bantu languages are so distinct that people who speak one language usually cannot understand their neighbors who speak another. Bantu patterns of social organization, forms of government, and ways of tracing KINSHIP vary widely. (*See also* **Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Livestock Grazing**.)

Barghash ibn Sa'id

1833(?)–1888
Sultan of Zanzibar

Sultan Barghash ibn Sa'id ruled ZANZIBAR from 1870 until his death in 1888. He was a reformer who tried to eliminate corruption and to improve the economy of Zanzibar.

Barghash rebuilt the clove economy after it was destroyed by a hurricane in 1872. Later he established a fleet of steamships that boosted the country's trade and revenues. The sultan used this new wealth to build a number of palaces and introduce public improvements such as electricity and piped water to the town of Zanzibar.

However, the sultanate soon came under the shadow of European colonial ambitions. In 1890 Germany and Britain signed two treaties that forced Barghash to accept reductions in the size of Zanzibar. Germany took Tanganyika (part of present-day Tanzania), leaving Zanzibar with only a narrow strip of coastal land in Kenya. The two offshore islands of Zanzibar and Pemba fell under British control. Barghash did not survive the breakup of his sultanate. (*See also* **Colonialism in Africa**.)

Barth, Heinrich

1821–1865
German traveler and explorer

Heinrich Barth was a German-born scholar who made two long trips to Africa that he recorded in a book called *Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa*. Barth's extensive knowledge of the peoples and places described in his book made it a standard reference for scholars of Africa.

Barth was educated in Berlin, where he earned a doctorate in 1844. Although he already spoke five languages, he went to London to perfect his Arabic before traveling in North Africa from 1845 to 1847. Shortly after his return to Germany, he accepted an invitation to join a British expedition to central Africa. The expedition began in 1850 but within a year its leader, James Richardson, died. Barth took over the expedition, which continued exploring as far south as the present-day countries of CHAD, CAMEROON, MALI, NIGER, and NIGERIA. Before returning to Europe in 1855, Barth visited the Arab leaders of the Sokoto Caliphate* as well as their rivals in the cities of Kukawa and TIMBUKTU.

* **caliphate** state in the Muslim empire

After leaving Africa, Barth settled in London. There he wrote an account of his travels, but it received little attention. Furthermore, the proud Barth quarreled with the Royal Geographic Society and the British government. He went home to Germany in 1859 but had no success there either. He failed to win political posts he sought, and he was denied full membership in the Royal Academy of Sciences. The University of Berlin also refused to name him to succeed his mentor Karl Ritter as professor of geography. In 1862 he published an important book, the *Collection of Vocabularies of Central African Languages*. He died three years later without achieving recognition for his accomplishments. That recognition came years after his death. (*See also* **Travel and Exploration**.)

BASUTOLAND

See *Lesotho.*

BECHUANALAND

See *Botswana.*

BELGIAN COLONIES

See *Colonialism in Africa.*

Bello, Ahmadu

1910–1966
Premier of Northern Nigeria

Ahmadu Bello, a Nigerian leader, served as the first premier of Northern NIGERIA in 1954, when the country was under British rule. He was active in the Northern People's Congress (NPC), a cultural organization that he helped transform into a political party in the early 1950s. Under Bello's leadership, Northern Nigeria and the NPC dominated Nigeria's politics at the time of its independence in 1960.

Bello was a direct descendant of the founder of the FULANI empire of Sokoto, a state in Northern Nigeria. He hoped to become the *surdauna* of Sokoto, the spiritual leader of Northern Nigeria's Muslim population. This position would have given him both political power and religious authority. Bello's ambitions, however, were cut short when he was murdered by the military during an uprising in January 1966. (*See also* **Colonialism in Africa, Independence Movements**.)

Ben Bella, Ahmed

1918(?)–
First president of Algeria

A leading figure in Algeria's struggle for independence from France, Ahmed Ben Bella served as the country's first president from 1963 to 1965. Educated at a French primary school near Oran, ALGERIA, he became involved with the independence movement while pursuing further studies in the nearby city of Tlemcen. During World War II he served in the French army, receiving the prestigious Croix de Guerre in 1940.

After the war Ben Bella returned home and helped found an underground political movement devoted to armed struggle against French colonial rule. In 1950, to gain money for the independence effort, he robbed a post office. He was captured and served two years in jail. After escaping to EGYPT, he met followers of the Egyptian revolutionary leader Gamal Abdel NASSER.

In 1954 Ben Bella and other Algerian leaders living in Egypt formed the National Liberation Front (FLN). The organization called for the overthrow of French rule in Algeria, and launched a civil war. French

authorities arrested Ben Bella in 1956, and he remained in prison until Algeria won its independence six years later. With the support of Colonel Houari Boumédienne, head of the National Liberation Army, Ben Bella became prime minister. He was elected president in 1963.

As president Ben Bella reestablished order in war-torn Algeria and instituted reforms in education and agriculture. However, his policies were often poorly planned. In 1965 Boumédienne overthrew Ben Bella, who remained under house arrest until after Boumédienne's death. Freed in 1980, Ben Bella spent the next ten years in exile, eventually returning to Algeria in 1990. (*See also* **Agriculture**, **Colonialism in Africa**, **Education**, **Independence Movements**.)

Bénin

The Republic of Bénin is located in West Africa along the Gulf of Guinea. It is bordered by Nigeria on the east, Togo on the west, and by Burkina Faso and Niger on the north. Bénin's present-day borders were shaped by the kingdom of Dahomey, which extended through the region in the mid-1800s, and by European countries trying to establish empires in Africa.

GEOGRAPHY

Although Bénin lies entirely within the tropics, it has considerable variety in both its geography and climate. Southern Bénin was once covered with rainforests, but most of the land has been cleared for agriculture. The destruction of rainforests has led to a decrease in precipitation during the two rainy seasons the south experiences each year. Forests cover central Bénin, savanna* dominates in the northeast, and the Atakora Mountains rise in the northwest. Northern Bénin has only one rainy season per year, which makes the region less suitable for raising crops.

Most of Bénin's population is concentrated in the south, where the land is better suited to farming. Both Bénin's capital, Porto Novo, and its largest city, Cotonou, are located in this region.

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

ECONOMY

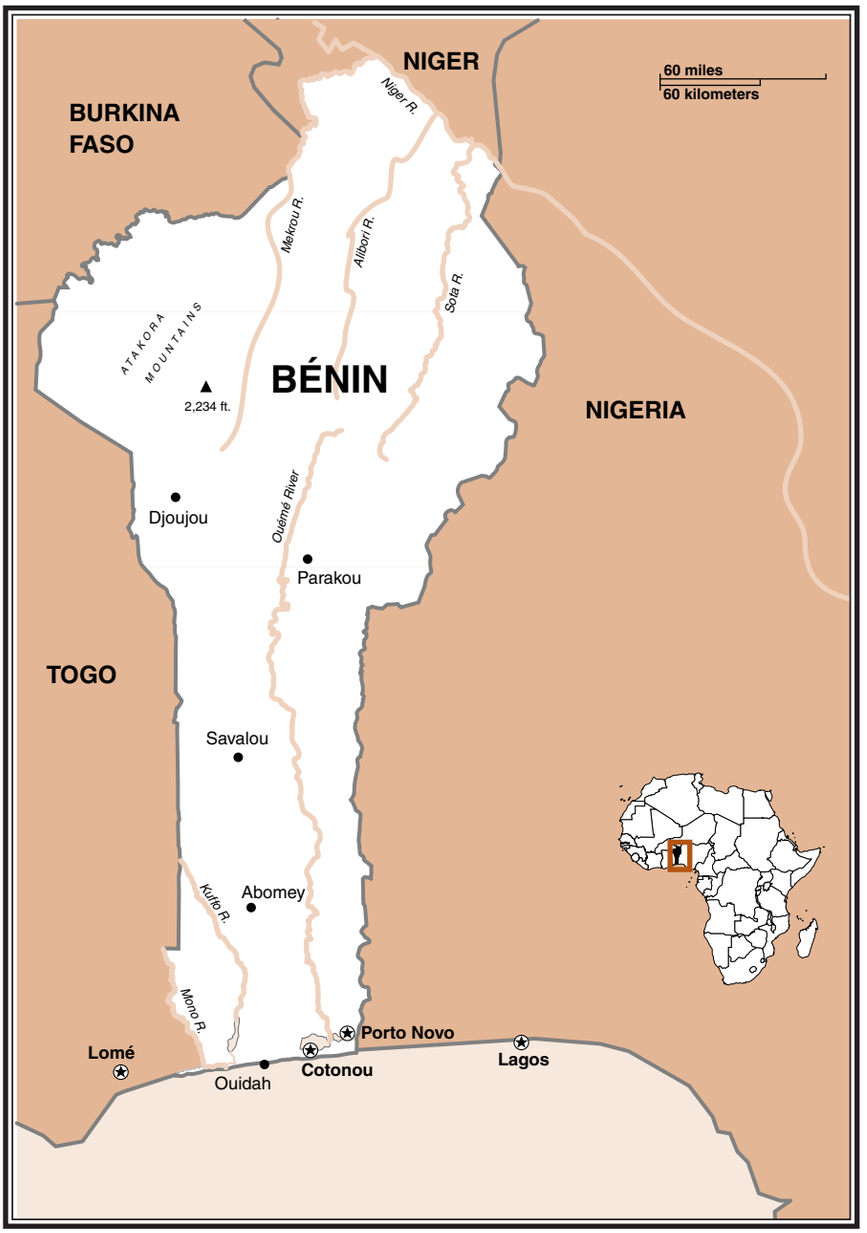
Bénin's economy is based on agriculture, informal trade (smuggling), and foreign aid. Due to a lack of infrastructure*—such as roads, railroads, and power generation—industry and trade have developed slowly in the country.

More than half of the people in Bénin make a living in agriculture, which accounts for about one third of the country's gross domestic product (GDP)*. However, most of the soil is of poor quality. Despite this disadvantage and a doubling of the population between 1962 and 1995, Bénin has been able to produce enough food to feed itself. It also exports food to Nigeria. Rice, corn, peanuts, and cotton are some of Bénin's main crops. Palm oil and palm kernel oil are also major agricultural exports.

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

* **gross domestic product (GDP)** total value of goods and services produced and consumed within a country

Bénin



Bénin has a long history of people smuggling goods across its border with Nigeria. The goods move in both directions. Most of the cocoa crop that Bénin exports is smuggled in from Nigeria. Illegal drugs from South America also enter Bénin before being shipped to Europe.

Regular trade with countries outside of Africa accounts for more than one third of GDP. Trade with African countries is much smaller because of internal problems such as lack of transport, customs barriers, and officials who charge "tariffs" that they keep for themselves. These help drive up the cost of transporting goods.

Industrial development in Bénin, based on international financing, has not had much success. Bénin has reduced the amount of oil it

Modern Witch-Hunt

In the 1970s President Kérékou's government sought to replace Bénin's local leaders with people loyal to the president. Some of the old leaders were Vodun (voodoo) priests, and the program to replace them led to a campaign to detect sorcerers and witches, who were considered dangerous. The first people accused of witchcraft held positions of power, but later the accused were mostly women and the elderly. Torture was frequently employed to obtain confessions. Many people opposed the witch-hunt, but others were glad that a government finally addressed the fear of sorcerers shared by large numbers of people. Although the campaign split communities and families, it did allow the government to replace old leaders.

imports by producing oil using offshore resources. A large percent of Bénin's electricity is generated in GHANA.

Foreign countries and international institutions provide more than $250 million of economic assistance to Bénin per year. Much of this aid has been misspent on projects such as trying to introduce plow agriculture in the south. A great deal of the funds also goes to pay government salaries, which take up a large portion of the national budget.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

The history of Bénin involves the history of several African kingdoms. Although Benin was the name of an ancient kingdom in what is now Nigeria, that kingdom is not related to present-day Bénin. This state is a twentieth-century invention, created by French colonial officials who combined areas that had few ties.

Precolonial Bénin. Before the 1800s the peoples of north Bénin were closely connected to the other lands of West Africa. South Bénin was ruled by a series of kingdoms controlled by the Fon and the Adja, who were related to peoples from Togo and Ghana. The most powerful of these kingdoms was that of Dahomey, which occupied southern Bénin as well as parts of present-day Togo and Nigeria. Dahomey built its power and wealth from trading slaves captured in raids on northern lands. The kingdom also produced palm oil and sold it to the French. Thus when the transatlantic SLAVE TRADE ended in 1851, Dahomey had a product available to replace slaves.

Colonial Bénin. The French hoped to build an empire in Africa and attempted to acquire territory on the West African coast. King Ghezo, who ruled from 1818 to 1856, gave France control over a portion of the coast that later became the city of Cotonou. However, the French wanted more territory, and in 1890 they mounted an attack on Dahomey with the help of the southern kingdom of Gun. The attack failed, but the French were successful two years later, and Dahomey became part of the federation* of FRENCH WEST AFRICA.

* **federation** organization of separate states with a central government

The French established an administration partially based on institutions from the kingdom of Dahomey. Colonial authorities relied on powerful local individuals to carry out policies in the villages and countryside. Overseeing this colonial structure were district officers who had the power to raise and collect taxes, recruit labor by force, and draft individuals into the military. However, French rule in Dahomey was quite unstable, and the colony produced little revenue.

See map in Archaeology and Prehistory (vol. 1).

In the early 1900s, Dahomey experienced a series of brief uprisings among several local peoples. Calls for independence grew louder after World War II. In 1960 France finally granted independence to Dahomey. Fifteen years later, Dahomey changed its name to Bénin.

Postcolonial Bénin. Between 1960 and 1972 Bénin had 12 separate governments, 5 of which were overthrown in coups*. During this time, French "technical advisers" actually controlled the workings of government, and France paid Bénin's national debt. In 1972 military leader

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

Mathieu Kérékou seized power and embarked on a communist* program of economic and social development. He took over large private plantations and turned them into cooperative* farms and nationalized* many businesses. The state also replaced local leaders who were not easily controlled by the central government.

In the early 1980s, Bénin suffered an economic crisis. Over the next several years, its state-owned banks began to fail and the salaries of government employees were paid irregularly. In 1989 the government cut its spending, and President Kérékou abandoned his communist political program and accepted a democratic constitution for Bénin.

In 1991 Nicéphore Soglo was elected president in free elections. Three years later, Bénin suffered an economic crisis when its currency was reduced in value by 50 percent, but the situation became more stable within a couple of years. In 1996 Kérékou defeated Soglo and returned as the country's president.

* **communist** relating to communism, a system in which land, goods, and the means of production are owned by the state or community rather than by individuals

* **cooperative** referring to a business or organization owned by its workers

* **nationalize** to bring land, industries, or public works under state control or ownership

Government. Bénin's government is a democracy headed by a president elected by the people. The president nominates cabinet ministers and the governors of Bénin's six provinces. Bénin's parliament has the power to make laws and decisions about the budget. In some ways, modern Bénin still operates like the colonial government. Local author-



Bénin's waterways serve as vital transportation routes. The residents of this village construct their houses directly over the water on tall stilts.



Republic of Bénin

POPULATION:
6,395,919 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:
43,483 sq. mi. (112,620 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:
French (official); Fon, Yoruba, Adja, Banba

NATIONAL CURRENCY:
CFA franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:
traditional 70%, Christian 15%, Muslim 15%

CITIES:
Porto Novo (capital), 330,000 (1999 est.); Cotonou, Abomey, Ouidah, Parakou, Natitingu

ANNUAL RAINFALL:
Varies from 58 in. (1,500 mm) in the southeast to 30 in. (770 mm) in the extreme north

ECONOMY:
GDP per capita: U.S. $1,300

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:
Agricultural: palm oil, cotton, coffee, cocoa, cassava, yams, corn, livestock, peanuts, timber
Manufacturing: vegetable oil processing, cement, textiles, palm products
Mining: offshore oil deposits, limestone, marble, iron ore

GOVERNMENT:
Independence from France, 1960. President elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: Assemblée Nationale elected by universal suffrage.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE 1980:
1972–1991 Major (later Lieutenant General) Mathieu Kérékou
1991–1996 President Nicéphore Soglo
1996– President Mathieu Kérékou

ARMED FORCES:
4,800 (1998 est.)

EDUCATION:
Compulsory for ages 6–12; literacy rate 37%

ities have a great deal of influence, and the central government relies on them to carry out policies. The laws of the state often have limited control over the workings of the local government, and the opportunities for corruption at the local level are great. Bénin does have a powerful constitutional court that requires that the government accounts for its actions. This has helped ensure that laws passed by the government follow the country's constitution.

PEOPLE AND CULTURES

The colonial government classified the people of Bénin by language, although that was only one of many ways by which they identify themselves. Some groups identify themselves through ancestry, and some through associations with other peoples. In reality the history of the people in the region has led to a pattern of settlement that is very mixed.

The largest single Béninese group is the Fon, whose language Fongbe is the dominant tongue in southern Bénin. Before the colonial period, Fon society was based on slave raiding, and many slaves became Fon when they were brought into Fon households. The Fon did not absorb members of every group they ruled over, however. The Ayizo, who had to send people to serve in the Fon army and who speak a dialect of Fongbe, resisted alliances or identification with the Fon. Bénin is home to several other former slave raiding peoples, such as the Wasangari and the YORUBA.

Gur speakers of the north, called Berba, identify themselves through a common initiation ritual. The Baseda and other groups living near the border with Togo belong to a cultural association based on mutual defense.

The Béninese people belong to several different religious groups. Although one third of the people practice either Christianity or Islam, the majority follow traditional African beliefs. Many practice VODUN, or voodoo, a religion that originated in Bénin and that involves the worship of many gods. (*See also* **Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity, History of Africa, Land Ownership, Slavery, Witchcraft and Sorcery**.)

Benin City

Located in the Bendel State of southern NIGERIA, Benin City is famous for the work of its numerous artisans. Despite its name, the city is not related to the nation of BÉNIN, which lies west of Nigeria.

Around A.D. 1000 a center of regional importance arose on the site of the present Benin City. This early town, also known as Benin, served as the seat of government for the ancient kingdom of Benin. In the mid-1200s Oba (king) Ewedo built an elaborate palace in the heart of the city. Destroyed by a revolt in about 1480, the capital was rebuilt by the victorious leader, Oba Ewuare. From that time on, the city became a center for the production of works of art in brass, ivory, and wood.

In 1897 the British sacked Benin City, seizing most of the palace's ornaments as well as items symbolizing the king's power. The city remains an important hub of regional trade today, receiving most of its income from the export of palm oil, rubber, and wood.

Berbers

The Berbers are a cluster of peoples who live in North Africa and in the northern parts of the Saharan countries of MALI, NIGER, and MAURITANIA. The Berbers have their own languages, which belong to the Hamitic or Afro-Asiatic language family, and they write in their own scripts.

The native people of the region, the Berbers resisted the Arab conquest of North Africa in the A.D. 600s. Eventually, though, they accepted Islam, the religion of the Arabs. During the 700s the Berbers took part in the Arab conquest of Spain. A few centuries later, they established the Almoravids and the Almohads, two of the Islamic empires that ruled North Africa and Spain. During the 1800s the Berbers fought against French colonization in Africa.

With a estimated population of more than 12 million, the Berbers consist of at least 200 groups or tribes. The Kabyle, Rif, and Shluh are the largest of the Berber groups. The desert-dwelling TUAREG are among the best known.

Traditionally the Berber economy depended on the herding of livestock, especially camels, and the farming of grain. Some mountain-dwelling Berbers on the fringe of the Sahara desert continue to graze livestock, moving seasonally to provide their herds with water and pasture. Most Berbers, however, live in rural settlements or small towns. Their livelihood is based partly on family farms and partly on the labor



The Tuareg, a Berber group of the northern Sahel, are skilled camel herders. In this photo, a Tuareg rider presses forward in a camel race.

of the men, who spend time working in North African or European cities and sending money home. Regarded as inferior by some urban Arabs and ruling parties, many Berbers live in poor and unproductive districts. (*See also* **North Africa: History and Cultures**.)

Beti, Mongo

1932–
Cameroonian novelist

Mongo Beti is Cameroon's most celebrated novelist. His early novels usually explore the conflict between traditional African values and those of European colonialists. His best-known works, published in the 1950s, feature characters who come to understand the injustice of colonial rule and to realize they must help end it.

Beti's most famous novel, *Le Pauvre Christ de Bomba,* tells the story of a well-meaning missionary sent to convert a small village. He eventually realizes that the villagers come to him only to learn about Western technology, and they neither want nor need European religious guidance.

Beti's later writing, starting with the 1972 work *Main basse sur le Cameroon: Autopsie d'une décolonisation,* deals mainly with the abuses of dictatorship in post-colonial Africa. This book, which condemned the postindependence regime of CAMEROON, was banned in France for five

years. Beti's other novels are also strongly political, and many of them are still banned in his native land. (*See also* **Literature**.)

Biafra, Republic of

See *Nigeria*.

Biko, Steve

1946–1977
South African social activist

Steve Biko, an outspoken opponent of apartheid*, earned fame as a leader of the black consciousness movement in the 1960s and 1970s. The movement was based on the belief that the divisions between whites and blacks in South Africa were so great that blacks could not count on whites to end apartheid. Biko also insisted that blacks had to form their own political structures and to develop a new sense of pride in their own culture, religion, and ethical system.

Born in the eastern Cape Province of South Africa, Biko studied medicine at the University of Natal. While in college he became politically active and established a number of all-black associations. His activities led the South African government in 1973 to restrict his movements and to forbid him to speak or write publicly. Four years later Biko was arrested and held without trial for violating his travel restrictions. He died in prison after being tortured by the police. His death served to rally opponents of apartheid, and Biko has been remembered worldwide in song, drama, and film. (*See also* **Apartheid**.)

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation in South Africa intended to maintain white control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

Blyden, Edward Wilmot

1832–1912
Pioneer of Pan-African Unity

Edward Blyden was a teacher and author who promoted the idea of black African pride. He stressed the importance of African languages and culture but also explored the possibility of combining African and Western cultures. The inventor of the phrase "African personality," Blyden laid the groundwork in his writings for the Negritude movement of the mid-1900s.

Of African descent, Blyden was born on the Caribbean island of St. Thomas. In 1850 he went to the United States to study at a theological college. However, the school refused to accept Blyden because of his color. The following year Blyden emigrated to Liberia, where he worked as a minister, teacher, and newspaper editor. He also served as Liberian ambassador to Great Britain and president of Liberia College. Blyden later moved to Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone. There he became increasingly interested in Islam and held the post of director of Muslim education. Blyden died in Freetown in 1912, but his ideas had enormous influence in the twentieth century among African and African American leaders and intellectuals. (*See also* **Independence Movements**.)

Body Adornment and Clothing

People communicate information about themselves by the clothes they wear and the way that they adorn their bodies. In Africa body decoration and dress may offer clues to a person's age, ethnic group, region, social position, and even political opinions. As Western-style attire becomes more common in Africa, some traditional types of adornment and dress are fading from everyday use—especially in the cities. However, many Africans still wear traditional clothing and decoration for special occasions or as a form of self-expression.

Body Adornment. Africans have been decorating themselves with paint or pigment since at least 4000 B.C., when people in SUDAN used ocher* as a cosmetic. Ancient Egyptians used cosmetics as well, enhancing their lips and cheeks with red coloring. Men, women, and children in EGYPT wore eye paint, or kohl, on both their upper and lower eyelids. In addition to being considered beautiful, kohl helped protect the eyes from insects and the glare of the sun.

* **ocher** red or yellow earth containing iron ore, used to color paints and textiles

Body paint also functions as a sign of social status and ethnic background and as part of many African rituals*. Turkana men in KENYA cake their hair with clay and red coloring to celebrate a successful hunt or the end of planting. In many parts of the continent, decorating the body with white clay represents spirituality. Ceremonies marking a new stage in life often involve body painting. Young Dan women from IVORY COAST, for example, paint themselves with bold geometric patterns during rituals that mark the passage from girlhood to womanhood.

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

For many years, people throughout Africa have created permanent body decorations by scarification, or making small cuts in the skin. As they heal, these minor wounds form scars. The procedure is usually performed during childhood, and the patterns and designs of the scarification are often similar to those used in a group's pottery and sculpture. Both men and women bear these scars, usually on the face, torso, thigh, or upper arm.

Some types of scarification carry special meanings. Certain scars on the foreheads of men in the IGBO region of Nigeria, for example, indicate high social rank. In some cultures, scarification is believed to make a person more beautiful or to provide magical or protective benefits. Because various peoples have developed distinctive styles of scarification, scars may also identify the wearer as a member of a particular ethnic group.

Other types of body decoration practiced in Africa are also permanent. In North Africa, some Bedouin and BERBER tribes mark their faces with tattoos. Berber tattoos often indicate membership in a particular group and are modeled after ancient Libyan script. Some East African peoples beautify themselves by extracting certain teeth or by filing or chipping their teeth into sharp points. Other groups pierce holes in their lips and earlobes and then gradually stretch them by inserting larger and larger plugs or plates.

Clothing. Long ago Africans dressed in skins, woven grass and raffia*, leaves, and cloth made of tree bark. Today such items are used only in a few places or during certain ceremonies. The Kuba people of CONGO

* **raffia** type of palm used for weaving and basketry

The Ancient Art of Beadwork

Since prehistoric times Africans have made beads of stone, shell, ivory, metal, and glass. People of western and central Africa cover garments with complex pictures or patterns of tiny beads. Some fine beadwork was traditionally reserved for officials, such as the kings of Benin and Yoruba. Women in Nigeria and Mali work beads into elaborate hairstyles. In eastern Africa both men and women may wear beaded ornaments indicating their clan, village, wealth, age, and marital state. African beadwork is more than simply beautiful. It is a powerful expression of personal identity and style.

(KINSHASA) still produce the embroidered raffia shirts with geometric patterns that both men and women used to wear for rituals and public events. However, today the main function of these shirts is to dress the dead at funerals.

Most Africans wear garments of woven cotton cloth. Men appear in a wide variety of smocks and robes. Rural men in Egypt and Sudan may wear the *jellaba,* an ankle-length robe with sleeves and side pockets, made to be worn over a shirt. A similar long, loose robe is the *dishdasha,* used by both men and women in ALGERIA.

A number of African garments consist of a single piece of cloth. Women frequently wear wrappers—large rectangles of cloth they wrap around their bodies. Often a woman dresses at home in a single wrapper tucked and twisted under her arms, and she adds additional items when appearing in public. The typical outfit of YORUBA women consists of a wrapper tied at the waist, a smaller cloth worn over the first wrapper or over the left shoulder, and a long-sleeved blouse. Nomadic men in Mali wear patterned wool blankets during the cold nights of the dry season. In parts of GHANA and Ivory Coast, men wrap themselves in a large, rectangular piece of cloth that is draped over the left shoulder.

Some African attire has special significance. A man's social position may be proclaimed by the size and shape of his smock or by the decoration of his robe. Among the BAMBARA people of MALI, hunters display their skill by wearing white smocks adorned with leather-covered amulets* and hunting trophies. An expert hunter's shirt may be almost invisible under the horns, claws, and bits of fur or hide the wearer has attached to it. Sometimes a particular pattern of cloth has a name that refers to a proverb, local event, or political issue. People wear these cloths because of the messages communicated by the patterns.

* **amulet** small object thought to have supernatural or magical powers

See color plate 15, vol. 1.

Accessories and Hairstyles. Jewelry and other accessories may express even more about their wearer than clothing does. Various styles of brass, stone, bone, or iron bracelets and armlets may declare an African's success, gender, or religion. In some cases, much of a person's wealth is worn in the form of gold jewelry. Belts, caps, and jewelry may be decorated with beadwork in designs that represent a certain idea or message.

See color plate 12, vol. 3.

Accessories often indicate a person's authority. In some societies, only leaders or members of special groups may wear items made of precious materials, such as ivory or gold. The pharaohs who ruled ancient Egypt wore a type of beaded necklace reserved only for gods. In ancient Benin, the traditional costume of the king consisted of a coral-beaded crown and smock, and jewelry of ivory and coral. The red of the coral represented power, while the white of the ivory stood for spiritual purity. Among the ZULU of SOUTH AFRICA, the king wears a necklace of leopard claws, while lesser chiefs wear ornaments of bone carved in the shape of leopard claws. Fly whisks—animal hair attached to handles and used to wave away flies—are symbols of leadership used by men throughout Africa. Both traditional and modern rulers often carry them during public appearances.

In North Africa the head covering is perhaps the most common



Africans use a wide range of items to decorate themselves and their clothing. These Gikuyu dancers in Kenya paint their faces and wear beaded belts and bracelets.

accessory. Some men wear the traditional Arab head cloth, or *kafiyya,* held in place with a coil of cord. Others may wear the fez, a cylinder-shaped hat that originated in the region. Among the TUAREG people of the Sahara region, men cover their heads and faces with long veils dyed blue with indigo, while women wear headcloths. Women in Muslim countries or communities have traditionally covered their heads and faces with a veil.

Hairstyles are also used in parts of Africa to express symbolic meaning as well as personal style. Common styling techniques include shaving, braiding, stringing beads on the hair, interweaving fibers with the hair, and shaping the hair with mud or clay. Some peoples use hairstyles to mark stages in life. Young men of the MAASAI shave their heads when they become adult warriors. Then they let their hair grow long, spending hours styling each other's hair into elaborate arrangements of many twisted strands coated with red mud. (*See also* **Art, Crafts, Initiation Rites**.)

Boer War

See *Afrikaner Republics; South Africa; Southern Africa, History*.

Bokassa, Jean-Bédel

1921–1996
President of the Central African Republic

Military leader Jean-Bédel Bokassa became the president of the Central African Republic after a coup* in 1966. Eleven years later, he had himself declared emperor and renamed the country the Central African Empire.

The son of a village chief, Bokassa began his military career in the French army in 1939. He fought in Indochina and achieved the rank of captain in 1961. By that time, the Central African Republic had gained its independence from France, and David Dacko was the new country's president. Bokassa returned home and was appointed chief of staff of the armed forces in 1964. He overthrew Dacko's government two years later, and in 1977 Bokassa declared himself emperor of the Central African Republic.

After more than 12 years as president and emperor, Bokassa's downfall began in 1979 when he ordered the army to shoot protesters. About 400 people died. Strikes by teachers and students led to the arrest, torture, and killing of children. Bokassa was overthrown and went to live abroad. When he returned the Central African Republic in 1986, he was arrested and charged with embezzlement*, murder, and cannibalism. He was sentenced to death in 1987. Freed six years later, Bokassa remained in the Central African Republic until his death.

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

* **embezzlement** illegal taking of money entrusted into one's care for personal use

Bornu

The empire of Bornu existed in north central Africa from about 1400 to 1900, when it became part of Britain's colonial empire. Bornu had its origins in an earlier state named Kanem that arose around 1200 in what is now southwestern Chad.

The leaders of Kanem were divided into two competing dynasties*: the Duguwa and the Sayfuwu. Driven out of Kanem in the mid-1200s, the Sayfuwu founded the state of Bornu on the southwestern shore of Lake Chad. They increased their power by defeating the local Sao people in the early 1300s. However, dynastic feuds troubled Bornu until the ruler Ali Gaji took power in the mid-1400s. Under his rule, Bornu extended its influence as far as the Hausa states (now northwestern Nigeria).

Bornu invaded Kanem in the early 1500s and again in the late 1500s, forcing its rulers to flee to the southeastern part of the kingdom. Under King Idris Alauma, Bornu conquered territory north into present-day Libya and drove the Sao onto islands in Lake Chad.

Attacked by the Fulani people in the early 1800s, Bornu managed to defeat the invaders in the 1820s. In the late 1800s the Arab warrior Rabih Zubayr conquered Bornu. Rabih died in 1900, and two years later the British moved into Bornu and made it part of their colony of

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

Nigeria. The kingdom of Kanuri still exists and is possibly the oldest state in Africa. (*See also* **Sudanic Empires of Western Africa**.)

Botswana

The country of Botswana is located in the center of southern Africa, surrounded by ZIMBABWE, ZAMBIA, NAMIBIA, and SOUTH AFRICA. Since gaining independence from Great Britain in 1966, Botswana has emerged as one of the most successful new nations in Africa.

Geography and Economy. Botswana is a dry land dominated by the KALAHARI DESERT, which occupies the western two-thirds of the country. Drought is a permanent feature of the climate. Almost all of Botswana's surface water lies in the rivers of the Okavango Delta in the northwest. Most of the vegetation consists of dry grasses, which are used for grazing cattle. Gaborone, the capital, is located in the southeast near the border with South Africa.

See map in Minerals and Mining (vol. 3).

Before the discovery of diamonds in the 1970s, Botswana's economy was based on livestock and money sent home by migrant laborers. Revenue from diamonds, however, has made Botswana the world's fastest-growing economy. The country has managed its wealth well,



The Politics of Race

In 1948 Seretse Khama of Bechuanaland married a white woman named Ruth Williams in England. Shortly afterward the government of South Africa adopted a policy of apartheid and called for Bechuanaland to be incorporated into the country. As a gesture to South Africa, the British banned Khama from his homeland. However, support in Bechuanaland for Khama and his marriage, and opposition to incorporation in South Africa, caused Britain to move carefully. The British eventually refused to make Bechuanaland part of South Africa. They allowed Khama to return in 1956, and within ten years he was elected as the first president of an independent Botswana.

avoiding the cycles of boom and bust common to many mineral-based economies. It has a small but well-functioning infrastructure*, and the government has actively promoted the growth of industry and commerce. As a result, average income is much higher than in most developing countries.

Most of the people of Botswana, who are known as Batswana, still live in rural areas and make their living by farming and raising livestock. The country relies heavily on South Africa for industrial goods, and the gap between the rich and the poor is among the highest in the world. Despite these difficulties, Botswana's economy is considered a model of success for developing countries.

History and Government. The people of the area now known as Botswana had little or no contact with Europeans until the late 1800s. At that time fighting broke out with Afrikaners (or Boers), Dutch settlers from what is now South Africa. In 1885 KHAMA III, chief of the Tswana people, asked Britain for help against the Afrikaners, and the region (then known as Bechuanaland) came under British protection.

After World War II, Bechuanaland, like many other African territories, sought independence from colonial rule. The independence movement gained momentum in the 1950s under the leadership of SERETSE KHAMA, a descendant of Khama III. By 1960 the people of Bechuanaland had gained the right to form independent political parties.

The most influential of the early political parties was the Bechuanaland People's Party (BPP). Supported by urban migrant workers, the BPP called for immediate independence and a socialist form of government. Seretse Khama, who felt that the BPP was too extreme, formed the rival Bechuanaland Democratic Party (BDP). The BDP's followers were mostly rural, and its leadership consisted mainly of cattle owners who had inherited their wealth. Like the BPP, the party sought independence, but it was not interested in socialism*. The BDP overwhelmingly won the first multiparty national elections in 1965. The following year, Bechuanaland achieved independence and renamed itself the Republic of Botswana.

Following independence, Botswana opposed South Africa's apartheid* government. However, it did not support UNITED NATIONS sanctions* against South Africa because it was dependent on trade with that country. During the 1970s Botswana had a tense relationship with the racist state of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), and it offered a haven to Rhodesian refugees. Rhodesia occasionally raided Botswana in pursuit of these refugees. During the 1980s South Africa accused Botswana of protecting anti-apartheid terrorists, and South African forces attacked Botswana in 1985. Since that time the conflict between Botswana and South Africa has calmed down, and the two countries have established diplomatic relations.

Political power in Botswana is shared by a directly elected National Assembly and a president chosen by the assembly. Elected councils oversee affairs at the district, town, and city level, but all these councils depend on the national government for funding. A body called the House of Chiefs, made up of the hereditary leaders of the main Tswana

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

* **socialism** economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation in South Africa intended to maintain white control over the country's Blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

* **sanction** measure adopted by one or more nations to force another nation to change its policies or conduct



Republic of Botswana

POPULATION:
1,576,470 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:
231,804 sq. mi. (600,372 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:
English, Setswana (both are official)

NATIONAL CURRENCY:
Pula

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:
Christian 50%, traditional 50%

CITIES:
Gaborone (capital), 134,000 (1999 est.); Serowe, Francistown, Lobatse, Selibi-Phikwe, Kanye, Maun, Molepolole, Ramotswa, Mochudi, Ghanzi

ANNUAL RAINFALL:
Varies from 18–25 in. (460–625 mm) in the extreme northwest to less than 5 in. (125 mm) in the extreme southwest

ECONOMY:
GDP per capita: U.S. $3,600

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:
Agricultural: livestock, sorghum, maize, millet, pulses, peanuts, beans, cowpeas, sunflower seeds
Manufacturing: meat processing, diamond processing, soda ash
Mining: diamonds, nickel, copper, coal, salt, potash

GOVERNMENT:
Independence from Great Britain, 1966. President elected by National Assembly. Governing bodies: National Assembly, elected by universal adult suffrage, and House of Chiefs.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:
1966–1980 President Seretse Khama
1980–1998 President Quett Ketumile Joni Masire
1998– President Festus Mogae

ARMED FORCES:
8,500

EDUCATION:
Compulsory for 7 years; literacy rate 70%

tribes, advises the assembly and carries out local political and judicial functions.

The political situation in Botswana has been remarkably stable since independence, with free and open elections. This has been made possible largely by the fact that the BDP has little effective opposition. The strength of Botswana's diamond-based economy has also helped the party maintain political power. The Botswana National Front (BNF) has been the main opposition party since independence. Although the party achieved some success in local elections, it has not gained much power nationally.

See color plate 2, vol. 4.

Peoples and Cultures. The main language groups in Botswana are Bantu and KHOISAN. Among the Bantu speakers, the Tswana are the most numerous as well as the largest single group in Botswana. The Tswana are divided into smaller local groups, each with its own chief.

Tswana families often have three homes: one in a village near schools and shops, one near a water hole where they keep their cattle, and one near their farmland. In the village, the Tswana practice a democratic form of leadership based on discussions in the *kgotla,* a central meeting place. Women usually work the land where crops are planted, and men generally tend the herds at the cattle post. The Tswana place a high value on cattle, which are often used as a form of payment. Other Bantu-speaking groups include the Herero and Mbanderu, who also raise cattle, and the Mbukushu, whose livelihood is based on fishing and farming.

The Khoisan peoples of Botswana can be divided into northern, southern, and central language groups. Many of them work herding cattle for Tswana landowners. The northern Khoisan are known as the

!Kung, and the main southern group is the !Xo. Cattle and goat herding people called the Khoikhoi also live in the south near the border with Namibia. The central Khoisan group includes a great number of peoples who have adopted Tswana customs, including the herding of cattle. In addition, Botswana contains a substantial white population, many of whom are ranchers living near the South African border or in the central-western Kalahari. (*See also* **Apartheid**, **Bantu Peoples**, **Climate**, **Colonialism in Africa**, **Deserts and Drought**, **Livestock Grazing**, **Refugees**.)

Boumédienne, Houari

ca. 1927–1978
President of Algeria

Houari Boumédienne was the first vice president of ALGERIA after it won independence from France in 1962. Three years later, he led a coup* against President Ahmed BEN BELLA. Boumédienne became Algeria's president and remained in that position until his death.

In his youth, Boumédienne was involved in the movement for Algerian independence. He rose to prominence as a military leader in the National Liberation Army during the Algerian War of Independence (1954–1962). Although he and Ben Bella supported each other in the early years, political differences arose between them over governing the newly independent country.

After Boumédienne staged his coup and took over the government, he kept control of the economy because he believed that it was better for economic decisions to be made by a central authority. He is credited with helping to improve the Algerian economy, but it had begun to suffer a decline by the time of his death. (*See also* **Independence Movements**.)

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

Boundaries in Africa

Before the arrival of European colonists, African boundaries were very loosely defined. Borders reflected the territories inhabited and controlled by different ethnic groups, and they often changed over time—generally as a result of migration or conquest. Moreover, these boundaries did not define all the available space in Africa. Some areas remained unclaimed or served as neutral zones between indigenous* ethnic groups.

European nations began to redraw African territorial lines in the late 1800s, when their interest turned from establishing coastal trading posts to developing the continent's rich inland resources. By the 1880s European explorers such as Sir Richard BURTON, David LIVINGSTONE, Henry Morton STANLEY, and John Speke were staking national claims to larger and larger portions of African territory. Many explorers arranged treaties with African chiefs, claiming the land for European rulers. Although much of Africa remained unknown and unexplored, European competition for territory increased with the desire to gain control of mineral resources and other riches from the African interior.

During this "Scramble for Africa," European countries tried to aquire as much territory as possible. The amount of territory that each nation

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

actually colonized depended largely on its power in Europe. Britain, France, Germany, and Italy, which were strong and rising European forces, ultimately controlled more land in Africa than weaker countries such as Spain and Portugal.

As a result of the "Scramble," the map of Africa changed from a collection of loosely defined ethnic territories into a series of fixed colonial states. European colonists set boundaries according to their territorial claims, with no regard for the traditional borders of indigenous peoples. In some cases, these new territorial lines divided ethnic groups between different colonial powers. In other cases, they placed groups with a history of hostility toward each other together in one colony.

The Europeans set boundaries by geography—or sometimes merely by drawing a straight line on a map. Natural features, particularly rivers and lakes, often became the borders of European colonies. For the most part such lines remained fixed, except when they were redrawn as a result of the changing fortunes of the colonial powers. For example, Germany lost its African territories after suffering defeat in World War I, and these territories were incorporated into the colonies of other nations.

African nations began to gain their independence in the 1950s, but the colonial boundaries remained basically unchanged. At first some African leaders called for creating a type of United States of Africa, with relatively open borders between nations. That idea never took hold. In some regions, border disputes—such as that between SOMALIA and ETHIOPIA—have contributed to ongoing or recurring conflicts.

Today, the boundaries that separate and define Africa's many nations are still based largely on the lines drawn by Europeans. National borders often divide members of ethnic groups or force historical enemies to live together. In such areas, people's allegiance to the state is often challenged by tribal and ethnic loyalties, and political unrest is common. (*See also* **Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Nationalism**.)

Bourguiba, Habib

1903–2000
President of Tunisia

* **nationalist** devoted to the interests and culture of one's country

* **socialism** economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

Habib Bourguiba, son of a former Tunisian army officer, grew up under French colonial rule in TUNISIA. He was a leader in his country's independence movement and became its first president in 1957.

After receiving a good education in Tunisia, young Bourguiba studied law in Paris. There he met other North Africans who were committed to independence from France. Bourguiba's interest in politics developed at this time, and on his return home he became active in the nationalist* movement. In the 1930s he established the Neo-Destour party. Over the years he transformed the nationalist movement into a mass movement. He also spent some time in prison for his political activities against French colonial rule.

Faced with broad support for independence across the country, the French decided to negotiate. They agreed to self-rule for Tunisia in 1955 and full independence in 1956.

The new President Bourguiba soon embraced socialism*, declaring his own Neo-Destour political party as the only one in the country. His gov-

ernment took over Tunisia's trade and industry and established cooperative farms*. When his policies proved unpopular, he changed course somewhat. Bourguiba's calls for a settlement in the heated Arab-Israeli dispute did not win him friends among the Arab nations. In addition, his policy of discouraging traditional Muslim religious practices made him unpopular with many in his own country.

By the late 1970s, Bourguiba's government was under attack for failing to make political changes. Moreover, his poor health led to extended bouts of unexplained behavior. In 1987 his appointed successor, General Zayn al-Abidine Ben Ali, had doctors declare Bourguiba unfit to rule. The ousted president retired to live in a palace in his home village along the Tunisian coast. (*See also* **Colonialism in Africa, Independence Movements**.)

* **cooperative farm** large plot of land worked by many farmers

Braide, Garrick Sokari

ca. 1882–1918
Nigerian religious leader

Garrick Sokari Braide, a Nigerian missionary and prophet, was largely responsible for the spread of Christianity in the Niger Delta region of Africa in the early 1900s. His preaching and methods combined traditional African elements with Christianity and stressed prayer and faith healing.

Braide was born in the village of Obonoma, the center of a cult* to a god called Ogu. Some accounts of Braide's life say that he practiced Ogunism as a youth. After becoming a Christian, Braide campaigned against the use of African religion symbols. But elements of Ogunism remained in his practice of Christianity.

In the late 1880s Braide probably attended the open-air Christian meetings that took place in his village. He became involved with the Anglican* Church and took instruction in Christianity for many years. He completed his studies and was baptized at the age of 28.

Braide went on to become a preacher and missionary and a prominent leader in the Niger Delta Pastorate Church. He was known for his gifts of prayer, prophecy, and healing. His reputation for performing miracles and magic, such as causing rain and storms, gained him wide recognition.

Braide preached against the use of alcohol, because drunkenness was a problem in the Niger Delta villages. His anti-alcohol movement caused conflicts with the British, who ruled Nigeria at the time and profited greatly from the sale of alcohol in their colonies. Uneasy about Braide's emergence as a public figure with a large following, the British arrested him in 1916 for sedition*. Braide was found guilty and jailed, but he was released several months before his death.

Braide left Africa with two legacies—the first was the spread of Christianity in Nigeria. The number of baptized Christians in the Niger Delta increased by almost 11,000 during the years he was preaching. Second, Braide showed Nigerians that they had the potential to become independent. As a leader who took a position against the colonial government and broke with the traditional church, he demonstrated that Africans could rise up and take control. (*See also* **Christianity in Africa, Religion and Ritual**.)

* **cult** group bound together by devotion to a particular person, belief, or god

* **Anglican** Church of England

* **sedition** resistance or rebellion against a lawful authority

Brazzaville

The city of Brazzaville is the capital of the Republic of Congo and one of the country's main industrial centers. It sits on the west bank of the Malebo Pool at the beginning of the navigable portion of the Upper Congo River, a place known as "the gateway to the heart of Africa." Founded by the French in 1883, the city takes its name from explorer Pierre de Brazza, who signed a treaty with a local king that gave France control of key parts of the region. Because of its location, Brazzaville became an important base in France's colonial empire in West Africa. During World War II it was the center in Africa of the French resistance to Germany and its allies.

Today Brazzaville is one of the industrial centers in the Congo (the others are Pointe-Noire on the Atlantic Coast and N'kayi, which lies between Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire). The leading industries in Brazzaville are textiles, food processing, and leather goods. Many goods are shipped between Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire, both by train and, in recent years, by motor vehicle and by air. Brazzaville is home to one of the Congo's two international airports.

Brazzaville has served as capital of the Congo since the country gained its independence in 1960. The city has about 1 million inhabitants, almost one third of the country's population. It is a main port on the Congo River and serves as the headquarters for many important African organizations. These include the World Health Organization's African headquarters, the Pan African Union of Science and Technology, and the African Petroleum Producer's Association. Brazzaville is also home to many educational, scientific, and technical institutions. (*See also* **Congo (Brazzaville)**.)

Brink, André

1935–
South African novelist

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation in South Africa intended to maintain white control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

André Phillipus Brink is a South African novelist who writes in both Afrikaans and English. He became known as known one of the "Sixtyers," writers of the 1960s who wanted to revolutionize South African fiction by addressing social, moral, and political issues.

Born in South Africa, Brink was educated both there and in France. His early books were not political in nature, but his later ones examined the human cost of the government's policy of apartheid*. His novel *An Instant in the Wind* (1975) deals with the destructive nature of racism by exploring the relationship between a black man and a white woman. In *The Chain of Voices* (1982), Brink looks at an 1825 slave revolt through the eyes of characters on both sides of the conflict. Though praised outside of South Africa, Brink's novels have often been unpopular in his homeland, and some were banned by the South African government. (*See also* **Apartheid, Literature**.)

British Colonies

See *Colonialism in Africa.*

Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso, formerly known as Upper Volta, is a landlocked nation in western Africa. It is one of many states formed after the breakup of the French colonial empire. Although the nation went through periods of unrest after gaining independence in 1960, it has become a relatively stable country. The name *Burkina Faso* means "Land of the Honorable People" or "Homeland of the Proud People."

GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMY

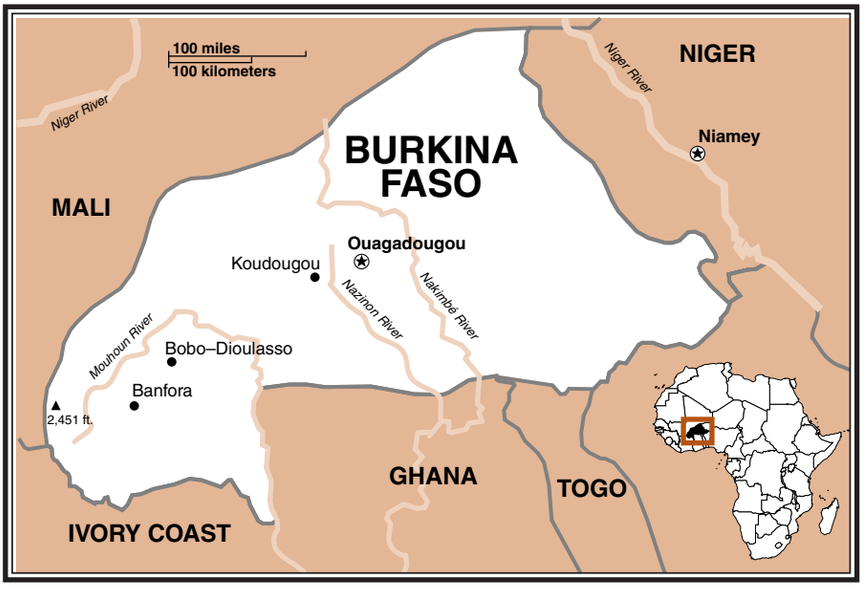
* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

Burkina Faso is a fairly flat country dominated by forests and savannas*. Towering mounds of red termites dot the grasslands. The northern region is quite dry, as is the country's southern edge, averaging only about 5 inches of rain per year. The central and southern regions of the country are generally much wetter, receiving 2 to 3 feet of rain annually. In all areas, the rains tend to fall in brief, heavy storms that can wash away crops and topsoil.

Most of the population makes a living from agriculture, raising livestock, cotton, and food crops. Livestock and related products such as meat and leather contribute about one-third of Burkina Faso's export revenues. Another important export is labor. About a million Burkinabé live in neighboring IVORY COAST and send money home to relatives. Many more residents leave the country to find work on a temporary or seasonal basis.

The small amount of industry in Burkina Faso is mainly concentrated in towns such as its capital, Ouagadougou. For years most industries were owned by the state, but since 1991 many have been transferred to private ownership. The nation's gold mining industry has grown in importance since the 1980s. However, a lack of funding and infrastructure*, such as roads and railroads, has hindered the mining of other minerals.

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works



Film Festival

For more than 30 years Burkina Faso has been a major center of African film. Every other year the nation's capital hosts the largest film festival in Africa, Festival Panafricain du Cinéma et de la Télévision de Ouagadougou (FESPACO). The event features a competition of African films from the whole continent.

Soon after film enthusiasts started the festival in 1969, FESPACO became a government-sponsored institution. Today FESPACO acts as a market for African film and television professionals, publishes works about African cinema, and maintains a African film library. It also strives to promote African cinema in other international festivals.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

Unlike much of western Africa, Burkina Faso was untouched by European influence until the late 1890s. Then the French gained control of the area and ruled it from 1904 to 1960.

Precolonial and Colonial History. Before the arrival of Europeans, many small household- and village-based societies occupied the western portion of what is now Burkina Faso. Mossi people from the south invaded the central and eastern areas of the region during the 1400s. According to tradition, the Mossi were descended from Naaba Wedraogo, the son of a princess of a town in northern Ghana. For many years, the Mossi moved throughout the region conquering new areas. In the late 1400s and early 1500s they established several kingdoms, the most important of which were Ouagadougou and Yatenga. The kingdoms featured complex political and religious systems.

The French arrived in the region in the 1870s. Over the next decades, they formed alliances with African societies that lived around the Mossi. In 1896 and 1897 the French defeated the Mossi and other independent peoples nearby. Naming the region Upper Volta, the French declared it a military zone in 1899. A few years later, they incorporated the area into the colony of Upper Volta-Senegal-Niger. The French colonial government introduced taxes and a military draft and forced the Africans to work for little or no pay. This treatment led to several rebellions—especially among the western peoples. The French crushed these uprisings and destroyed all traces of African rule.

Upper Volta became a separate colony in 1919. However, the French soon found that its only economic value was as a source of laborers for other colonies. Within 13 years, they divided Upper Volta's territory between the colonies of Ivory Coast, Niger, and Soudan (now Mali). After World War II, France granted new political rights to its African colonies. In response to pressure from Mossi leaders, it made Upper Volta a separate colony again in 1947.

In 1958, when France allowed each of its African colonies to vote for independence, Upper Volta chose to remain a largely self-governing French colony. Maurice Yaméogo, the head of Upper Volta's main political party, the Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (RDA), was elected president of the Council of Ministers. In 1960 he banned the main opposition party. Later that year Upper Volta requested and received independence from France. With no organized opposition, Yaméogo was chosen president, and the RDA became the dominant political force in the country.

The Early Republics. Yaméogo was reelected in 1965 with nearly 100 percent of the vote. He then tried to place tight restrictions on government spending. Trade unions protested the restrictions by calling a general strike in January of the following year. Amid the unrest, the army overthrew Yaméogo's government, and Colonel Sangoulé Lamizana took over the presidency. Lamizana ended Yaméogo's ban on political activity. However, when violence erupted between competing political



Traditional and modern cultures mingle in this urban market in Burkina Faso, where handcrafted items are sold alongside factory-produced household equipment.

groups, Lamizana re-imposed the ban. He announced military rule but promised to restore civilian government after four years.

Free elections were held in 1970, and a new constitution created Upper Volta's Second Republic. The constitution provided for Lamizana to continue as president for four years, and it called for the military to participate in all political institutions. A new crisis arose in 1974, when Prime Minister Gérard Ouédraogo lost support in parliament but refused to resign. Lamizana again proclaimed military rule and banned political parties. When he tried to establish a single political party for the nation the following year, the trade unions responded angrily with another general strike. Lamizana backed down, and in January 1976 he appointed a new government consisting mostly of civilians.

In 1977 another constitution established the Third Republic. It limited the number of political parties to the top three vote-winners in the national elections that followed. Lamizana was reelected president. However, no single political party won control of a majority of the seats in the assembly. The result was a weak government that once again ran into difficulty with the trade unions. A strike in late 1980 was followed by a military coup* led by Colonel Saye Zerbo. However, friction grew between leaders of the military government, and Zerbo himself was overthrown in late 1982.

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government



Burkina Faso

POPULATION:
11,946,065 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:
105,869 sq. mi. (274,200 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:
French (official); Mossi, Dyula, many local languages

NATIONAL CURRENCY:
CFA Franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:
Muslim 50%, traditional 40%, Christian 10%

CITIES:
Ouagadougou (capital), 1,100,000 (2000 est.); Bobo-Dioulasso, Koudougou, Ouahigouya, Kaya, Banfora

ANNUAL RAINFALL:
Varies from 40 in. (1,000 mm) in the south to less than 10 in. (250 mm) in the north

ECONOMY:
GDP per capita: U.S. $1,000

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:
Agricultural: peanuts, livestock, cotton, sesame, sorghum, millet, maize, rice, shea nuts
Manufacturing: cotton tint, food and beverage processing, soap, agricultural processing, cigarettes, textiles
Mining: gold, manganese, limestone, marble, antimony, copper, nickel, bauxite, lead, phosphate, zinc, silver

GOVERNMENT:
Independence from France, 1960. President elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: Bicameral national legislature—Assemblée des Députés Populaires and Chambre des Représentants.

HEADS OF STATE:
1980–1982 Colonel Saye Zerbo
1982–1983 Surgeon-Major Jean-Baptiste Ouédraogo
1983–1987 Captain Thomas Sankara
1987– President Captain Blaise Compaoré

ARMED FORCES:
5,800 (1998 est.) Compulsory 18-month service.

EDUCATION:
Compulsory for ages 7–13; literacy rate 19%

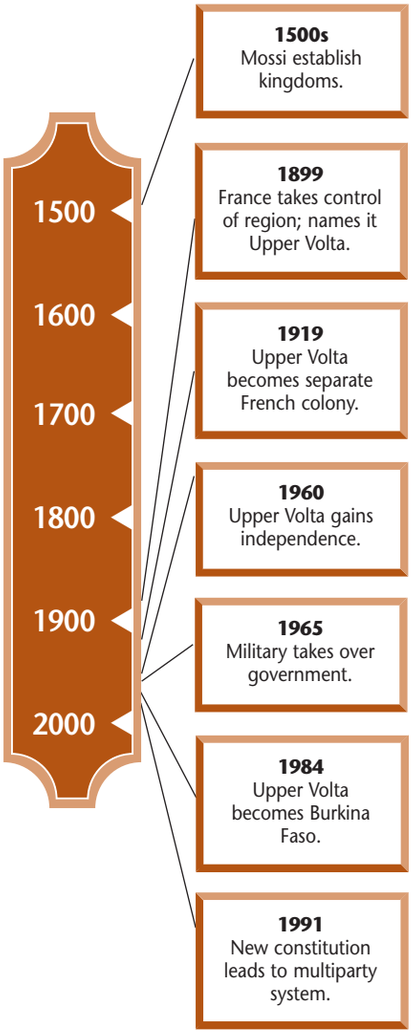
Communist Rule and The Fourth Republic. The leaders of the coup created a ruling body called the Council for the People's Salvation (CSP). The CSP named Surgeon-Major Jean-Baptiste Ouédraogo president and Captain Thomas Sankara prime minister. Sankara quickly abandoned the nation's allies in the West and established ties with developing countries such as Libya, Cuba, and North Korea. Critics within the government arrested Sankara in May 1983, but Captain Blaise Compaoré freed him in August and overthrew the CSP.

Backed by communist* groups, Sankara adopted a foreign policy that rejected Western governments. To symbolize the country's break with its colonial, pro-Western past, Sankara changed Upper Volta's name to Burkina Faso in 1984. He established "revolutionary councils" at all levels of society to try to establish a totalitarian* system with himself at its head. However, as Sankara began using force to maintain power, opposition to his rule increased. He eventually lost the support of his own people, and in October 1987 Captain Compaoré ordered his troops to kill Sankara.

Compaoré reversed many of Sankara's policies and rejected the previous government's communist ties. In 1991 a new constitution was approved reestablishing multiparty politics and direct election of the president and National Assembly (Assemblée des Députés Populaires). Later that year Compaoré was elected as the first president of the Fourth Republic. However, the opposing parties refused to participate in the election because they felt the government was not protecting their rights. In response, Compaoré ended persecution of his political opponents and called new elections in April 1992. He was again elected and

* **communist** relating to communism, a system in which land, goods, and the means of production are owned by the state or community rather than by individuals

* **totalitarian** referring to a government that exercises complete control over individuals, often by force



* **tribute** payment made by a smaller or weaker party to a more powerful one, often under the threat of force

continues to serve as president of the country. However, his government has not always responded well to criticism, and in 1995 an opposition leader was jailed for insulting Compaoré.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

Burkina Faso is home to many different ethnic groups. The largest of these, the Mossi, make up nearly half of the population. Other major groups include the FULANI, the Gulmanceba, and the Gurunsi. The social organization of most of these peoples is based upon the lineage—a kind of extended family. Each lineage traces its origins back to a common, often mythical, ancestor and forms a group that usually lives in a particular village neighborhood. Most lineages trace descent through male family members.

Older members of society are treated with great respect. In many places the oldest male member of the family makes all of the important decisions for his family. The oldest male in a lineage is in charge of dealing with local gods. In many cases, he also has responsibility for enforcing laws and serves as a peacemaker. Although women hold few leadership posts or religious offices, they do exercise informal influence.

A male political leader, a *naaba,* holds a sacred position among the Mossi, the Gulmanceba, and the Gurunsi. In addition to his special spiritual powers, the *naaba* owns the land and its inhabitants. At one time he could require subjects to serve him as warriors and laborers and to pay tribute*. The *naaba* protected his power by granting distant villages and lands to certain princes and to descendants of the founder of the empire.

The peoples of Burkina Faso share a rich religious heritage. In traditional agricultural religions, the spirit of the earth and the spirits of ancestors are particularly important. These spirits ensure that people follow custom and tradition, and they provide the community with rain, fertility, and health. The spirit of heaven is also prominent in local religions. Heaven, which made the world, is responsible for rain, fate, and children's souls.

Bush spirits rule the land outside the villages. Besides controlling the abundance of game and the fortune of hunters, they also punish wrongdoers. These spirits appear in the form of animals—most often reptiles—who serve the lineage elders. Lineage members must not kill or eat these animals because they may help elders find water or lead them to victory over enemies. The spirits inhabit prominent places in nature such as hills, rocks, lakes, and caves.

Fortune-tellers play an important part in traditional beliefs. They give people advice on what actions to take in everyday life, and they teach them to use nature's powers for their own purposes. However, WITCHCRAFT or other types of magic that cause damage or trouble are generally avoided. Although many people still follow traditional religious beliefs and practices, some of Burkina Faso's people have adopted Christianity, and about half the nation's population is Muslim. (*See also* **Colonialism in Africa, Unions and Trade Associations**.)

Burton, Sir Richard Francis

1821–1890
British explorer

Sir Richard Francis Burton made four journeys in Africa in the mid-1800s. Although he failed in his mission to locate the source of a branch of the Nile River, he contributed greatly to European knowledge of African geography.

Born in Torquay, England, and raised in France and Italy, Burton served in the British army in India. He mastered many languages, including Arabic, and became famous for disguising himself as a Muslim and entering the holy city of Mecca in Arabia. In 1854–1855, an expedition with fellow explorer John Hanning Speke into eastern ETHIOPIA and what is now SOMALIA ended in disaster when Somalis wounded both men. In 1857 the two explorers again moved westward from the East African coast, seeking the source of the White Nile. Their friendship ended in disagreement over whether the river originated in Lake Victoria. Burton, who claimed that it did not, was later proven wrong.

Burton's later career included three years of diplomatic* service in West Africa, during which he studied local customs. His books about West African life, along with the popular narratives of his earlier explorations, formed the popular image of Africa. Burton died in Trieste, in northeastern Italy. (*See also* **Travel and Exploration**.)

* **diplomatic** involved with conducting relations with other nations

Burundi

A small, densely populated country located in the heart of east central Africa, Burundi is one of the poorest nations in the world. It also has experienced some of the most serious and violent conflicts on the African continent. These conflicts are rooted in a struggle for control between the country's two main ethnic groups, the Tutsi and the Hutu.

GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMY

Located just south of the equator, Burundi is a land of rolling hills and lakes. There are spectacular escarpments* in the northeast and savannas* in the southwest. Bujumbura, the capital, sits along the shore of Lake Tanganyika, which forms the country's southwestern border.

Much of Burundi's original forest has been cut down, with woodlands remaining mostly on upper mountain slopes. Burundi's wildlife includes antelopes, baboons, and warthogs, but poaching—illegal hunting—has taken a toll on many species, including the elephant.

Although Burundi lies near the equator, its high elevation keeps the climate mild year-round. Rainfall is fairly evenly distributed throughout the year except for a dry season from May to August. Although soil erosion is a serious problem in hilly areas, the rich soil in the larger river valleys provides good conditions for farming.

Burundi's economy is based primarily on agriculture. The main commercial crops are coffee, cotton, and tea. Coffee, the leading cash crop*, accounts for the majority of the nation's export earnings. Most agriculture, however, consists of subsistence farming* of food crops such as beans, corn, cassava*, and sorghum*. Raising livestock such as cattle, sheep, and goats, is also important.

* **escarpment** long, clifflike ridge of land or rock
* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth
* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption
* **subsistence farming** raising only enough food to live on
* **cassava** starchy root plant; source of tapioca
* **sorghum** family of tropical grasses used for food



Burundi has very little industry or mining, and its poor transportation system limits industrial growth. Concentrated in Bujumbura, the country's few industries consist of consumer goods manufacturing and food processing. In addition, political instability has damaged the economy in recent years, causing Burundi to rely heavily on foreign aid to meet its basic needs.

PEOPLES AND CULTURE

The people of Burundi belong to three main ethnic groups—the Hutu, the Tutsi, and the Twa. The majority of the people are Hutu, and the

Tutsi Culture

The Tutsi, one of the two main ethnic groups in Burundi, possess a rich artistic heritage. Traditional Tutsi ceremonies included graceful dances accompanied by pulsing rhythmic music. Dancers wore elaborate costumes ornamented with animal skins and hair. The Tutsi were also noted for their singing, often used to tell a story. One Tutsi song identifies warriors on their way into battle; another describes the actions of hunting dogs tracking game.

Tutsi make up about 20 percent of the population. The Twa, a Pygmy people and the original inhabitants of the region, represent less than 1 percent of the population today.

The people of Burundi speak three major languages: Rundi, French, and Swahili. Rundi, the most widely spoken, is a Bantu language. People involved in trade often use Swahili. A large percentage of the population is Christian, mostly Roman Catholic. However, many people—including some Christians—also practice traditional African religions.

Although Burundi has one of the highest population densities—the number of people who inhabit each square mile—in Africa, few people live in urban areas or even in villages. Most live in small family compounds scattered around the countryside. In these isolated settlements, family members build clusters of beehive-shaped huts.

Burundi's society is made up of a hierarchy* of rankings based on ethnic or clan* identity. Traditionally, the Twa have occupied the lowest level. The highest social rank has consisted of princely Tutsi families, who are descended from the rulers of ancient kingdoms that occupied the region.

Traditionally, the Hutu have been farmers, while the mostly tall Tutsi have raised cattle. A long history of mistrust and fear between the Hutu and Tutsi has led to periodic struggles between the two groups. In the 1970s the ethnic conflict between the Hutu and Tutsi erupted in civil war, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people.

* **hierarchy** organization of a group into higher and lower levels

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

The Hutu began migrating into Burundi around A.D. 1000; the Tutsi arrived about 400 years later. Although outnumbered by the Hutu, the Tutsi eventually gained dominance in the area and founded a number of kingdoms. By the 1800s the entire region was ruled by a Tutsi king.

In 1890 Burundi and its neighbor RWANDA became part of the colony of German East Africa. In 1919, after Germany's defeat in World War I, the League of Nations* placed the region under Belgian rule. Belgian control of the territory—later known as Ruanda-Urundi—continued until 1962, when the region became the two independent nations of Rwanda and Burundi.

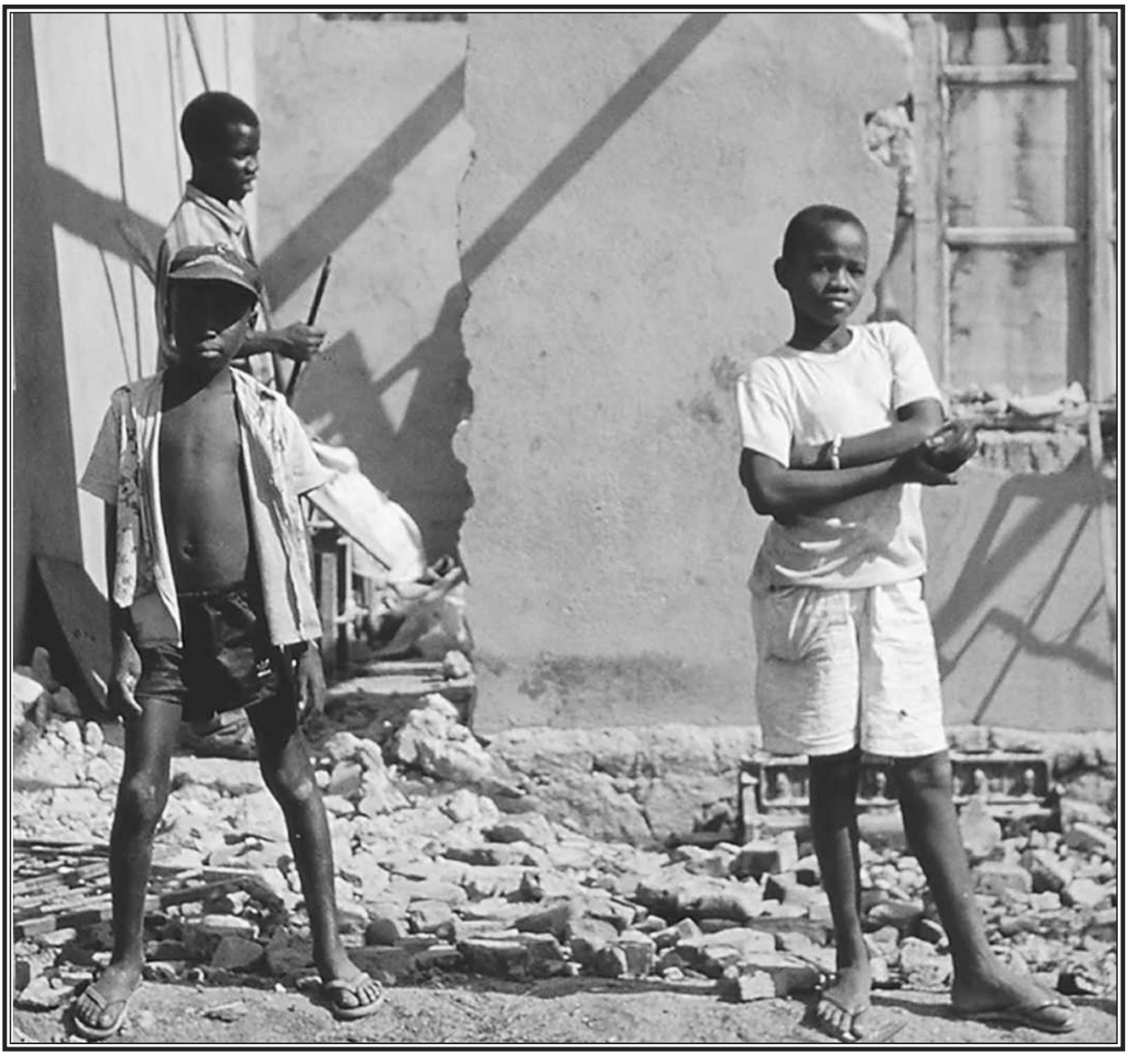
* **League of Nations** organization formed to promote international peace and security; it functioned from 1920 to 1946

Ethnic Conflict. After independence on July 1, 1962, Burundi became a constitutional monarchy ruled by the Tutsi *mwami,* or king. Hostilities between Hutu and Tutsi began to increase over the next several years, and fighting broke out a number of times. In October 1965, a group of Hutu army officers tried to overthrow the monarchy. The attempt failed, and the Tutsi retaliated by executing many Hutu—political leaders, intellectuals, and ordinary citizens.

A military coup* in November 1966 ended the monarchy and led to the establishment of a republic. Michel Micombero, a Tutsi, became president of the new government. At this point, Burundi politics tended to revolve around internal struggles within the Tutsi minority. In the background, however, there loomed the threat of insurrection* by the Hutu majority.

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

* **insurrection** violent uprising against authority; rebellion



Since independence ethnic conflict between Burundi's Hutu and Tutsi has periodically erupted in episodes of violence. In this photo a group of Hutu return to their homes after a Tutsi attack.

In 1972 a wave of violence erupted in Burundi as the Hutu rebelled against Tutsi oppression. The uprising triggered massive attacks by the Tutsi against the Hutu. At least 100,000 Hutu were killed between April and September. The killings and repression intensified the hatred between the two groups. The attack marked an important point in the Hutu–Tutsi conflict, as it truly brought the Hutu people together because they were suffering at the hands of the Tutsis.

Conflicts within the Tutsi led to the overthrow of Michel Micombero by a military coup in 1976 and the rise to power of Jean-Baptiste Bagaza, another Tutsi. Bagaza was overthrown in 1987 by another military coup led by Pierre Buyoya. Under Buyoya, Burundi was ruled by a military

* **junta** group that runs a government, usually after seizing power by force

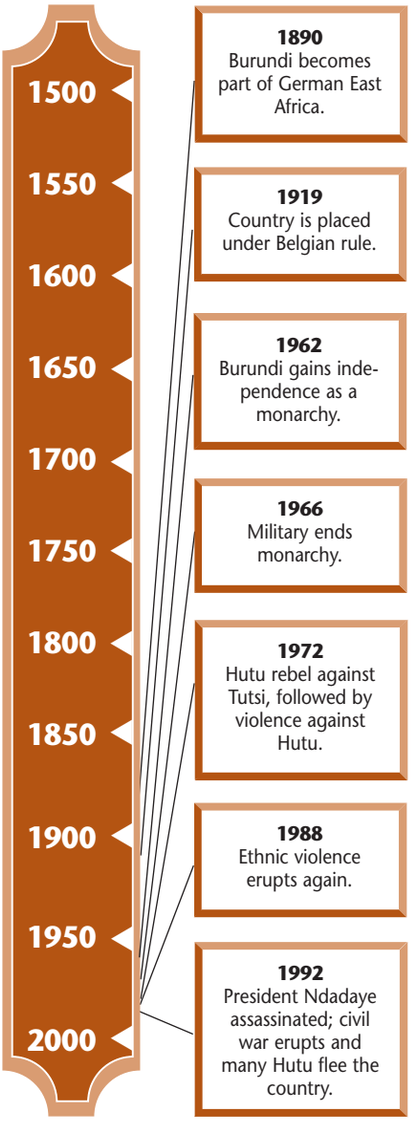
junta*. Ethnic hostilities between Hutu and Tutsi erupted again in 1988, causing many Hutu to flee the country.

Attempts at Reform. Attempts by President Buyoya to reform the government and lessen ethnic divisions led to the adoption of a new constitution in 1992. The document prohibited political organizations based on ethnic identity and required political parties to include representatives from both the Hutu and Tutsi. Under this new constitution, Burundi held its first free democratic election in 1993. Hutu leader Melchior Ndadaye won the presidency in a landslide, ending nearly 30 years of Tutsi control.

Ndadaye freed many political prisoners and set up an administration that was two-thirds Hutu and one-third Tutsi. However, this attempt at two-party government came to a dramatic end in October 1993, when Ndadaye was assassinated in a Tutsi-led military coup. News of Ndadaye's assassination outraged the Hutu, who responded by killing tens of thousands of innocent Tutsi civilians.

The wave of violence in 1993 was followed by attacks against the Hutu led by the largely Tutsi army, causing nearly 800,000 Hutu to flee to neighboring countries. An uneasy calm returned to Burundi when moderate leader Cyprien Ntaryamira became president in January 1994. However, his term of office came to an abrupt end the following April when the plane in which he and Rwandan president Juvenal Habyarimana were traveling crashed in suspicious circumstances.

The announcement of Ntaryamira's death had little effect in Burundi. In Rwanda, however, the death of President Habyarimana had a dramatic impact. Like Burundi, Rwanda also has a population of Hutu and Tutsi divided by ethnic rivalries. Suspicion for the crash and the death of President Habyarimana fell on Tutsi groups, setting off a wave of violence against Rwandan Tutsi.



Outlook for the Future. Events in Rwanda increased ethnic tension in Burundi. Tens of thousands of Hutu and Tutsi refugees fled Rwanda and sought safety in Burundi. The presence of these refugees carried the seeds of further conflict.

After the death of President Ntaryamira, the Hutu leader Sylvestre Ntibantuganya became acting president of Burundi. Days later Tutsi soldiers began attacking Hutu, and a group of Tutsi tried to stage a military coup. The coup failed and outbreaks of violence continued.

Growing international concern about Burundi prompted the United Nations to send advisers to study the situation in 1995. By 1996 UN reports of civil war in various parts of Burundi led the United States and many European nations to suspend their foreign aid to the country.

The threat of violence remains high in Burundi, and the country faces continuing political and economic problems. A military coup in 1996 returned president Pierre Buyoya to power, and he has struggled to resolve the many problems facing his country. Meanwhile, fighting has continued in many parts of Burundi. It remains to be seen whether the nation will be able to resolve its problems in the near future. (*See also*



Republic of Burundi

POPULATION:
6,054,714 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:
10,747 sq. mi. (27,834 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:
Rundi, French (both official); Swahili

NATIONAL CURRENCY:
Burundi franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:
Christian 67%, traditional 32%, Muslim 1%

CITIES:
Bujumbura (capital), 300,000 (1994 est.); Gitega, Ngozi, Kayanza, Mwaro

ANNUAL RAINFALL:
Ranges from 1,194 mm (47 in.) on the plateaus to 762 mm (30 in.) in lower areas

ECONOMY:
GDP per capita: U.S. $740

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:
Agricultural: coffee, cotton, tea, cassava, sorghum, maize, livestock, hides
Manufacturing: light consumer goods, food processing
Mining: nickel, uranium, vanadium, phosphates

GOVERNMENT:
Independence from Belgium, 1962. Transitional regime. President elected by universal suffrage. Legislature: Assemblée Nationale (elected by universal suffage)

HEADS OF STATE SINCE 1976:
1976–1987 President Jean-Baptiste Bagaza
1987–1993 President Pierre Buyoya
1993 President Melchior Ndadaye
1993–1994 Interim government; President Cyprien Ntaryamira
1994–1996 President Sylvestre Ntibantuganya
1996– President Major Pierre Buyoya

ARMED FORCES:
40,000

EDUCATION:
Compulsory for ages 7–13; literacy rate 35%

Agriculture, Bantu Peoples, Class Structure and Caste, Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Genocide and Violence, Refugees, Tribalism, United Nations in Africa.)

BUSHMEN

See ***Khoisan***.

Busia, Kofi A.

1913–1978
Prime minister of Ghana

Born into African royalty, Kofi A. Busia was elected prime minister of GHANA in 1969 and led his country for a brief period. In addition to politics, Busia focused on philosophy and economics. He earned a doctoral degree from Oxford University in England and wrote many books, including *Africa in Search of Democracy* (1967).

In 1942 Busia was appointed one of the first African district commissioners under British colonial rule. He continued his political activities as a member of the colonial legislative assembly in 1951. As Ghana neared independence in 1956, Busia became the leader of the National Liberation Movement (NLM). The party was formed to oppose the government of Prime Minister Kwame NKRUMAH. After Nkrumah moved against political opponents, Busia fled Africa fearing arrest. He spent the next years in the Netherlands and Britain.

In 1966 military leaders overthrew Nkrumah, and Busia returned to Ghana as an adviser to the new government. Three years later he became prime minister. His government was marred by conflicts with workers and the military, a sagging economy, and the exile of non-Ghanaian Africans from the country. Overthrown by the military in 1972, Prime Minister Busia again left Ghana and spent the rest of his life in Britain.

Cabinda

Cabinda, a province of the country of ANGOLA, is separated from Angola by a narrow strip of land belonging to the CONGO (KINSHASA). Though small in size (about 2,800 sq. miles), Cabinda has figured prominently in the economics and politics of the region for many years—particularly because of its valuable oil fields.

Europeans visited the region in the 1500s to trade for copper, ivory, and slaves. When European powers carved Africa up into colonial empires, the Portuguese gained control of Cabinda. To keep a close watch on separatist groups within the local population, Portugal made the port city of Cabinda a district capital of northern Angola. Portuguese companies exported the riches of Cabinda, including timber, cocoa, palm products, and other resources.

In the 1960s oil was discovered offshore, making Cabinda one of Angola's key resources. When Angola won independence in 1975, a civil war began between the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). Both groups hoped to control Angola eventually, and neither wanted to lose the valuable Cabinda. While the rest of Angola's economy suffered during the war, government forces protected Cabinda's oil operations and oil production continued.

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

At the same time, the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC), formed in the 1960s, waged a guerrilla* war for Cabindan independence. It sometimes fought from bases in neighboring countries. Both the MPLA and the UNITA attacked FLEC at one time or another. In the mid-1990s, the MPLA and the UNITA officially ended their conflict, but FLEC continues its battle. Although many Cabindans support independence, FLEC is too divided by internal rivalries to accomplish this goal. However, it seems likely that a majority of the population would vote for some type of independence if a free vote was held. It is also hard to determine the size of the Cabinda population due to the area's instability in the late twentieth century and the coming and going of refugees. It has been variously estimated at 100,000 and 200,000.

Meanwhile, Cabinda's rich resources continue to make the region of vital importance to Angola. The Cabinda Gulf Oil Company, run by the American firm Chevron, produces over half of Angola's oil. Natural gas deposits have also been found in the area. (*See also* **Colonialism in Africa**.)

Cabral, Amílcar Lopes

1924–1973
Political and revolutionary activist

* **oppression** unjust or cruel exercise of authority

Born in the Portuguese colony of GUINEA (later, GUINEA-BISSAU), Amílcar Lopes Cabral went to Portugal to study. After graduating from the University of Lisbon, he returned home a revolutionary leader, and he brought about Guinea-Bissau's independence.

Cabral believed that people who opposed oppression* should take action and commit themselves to social reform. He won respect at home and abroad for his political convictions. In 1956 he formed and led an underground movement against Portuguese rule. In time the movement achieved military and political victories, but Cabral himself was assassinated by Portuguese agents in 1973. The following year Guinea-Bissau gained independence, and Cabral's brother became the first president of the new country.

Cairo

* **medieval** referring to the Middle Ages in western Europe, generally considered to be from the A.D. 500s to the 1500s

Cairo is the capital of EGYPT and the largest city in Africa. The city's strategic location on the NILE RIVER has made it a defensive stronghold for Egypt for nearly 1,500 years. In medieval* times, Cairo was one of the busiest centers of trade and education in the Mediterranean and Middle East. Today the city remains a vibrant hub of Islamic culture and politics.

History. Before the founding of Cairo, other great cities had risen and faded in the area. Just to the southwest was Memphis, the first capital of ancient Egypt, built by the pharaohs around 3000 B.C. To the northeast stood Heliopolis, an important religious center around 2500 B.C. It later housed Greek schools where Plato and other famous philosophers studied.

Modern Cairo began as a military camp. It was established in A.D. 640 by Amr ibn al-As, an Arab leader who brought ISLAM to Egypt. Over the next 300 years Arab rulers added to and improved the city, known as al-Fustat, which developed into a major river port.

* **sect** religious group

In 969 the Fatimids, an Islamic sect*, invaded the region and built the city of al-Qahirah (meaning "The Victorious") northeast of al-Fustat. *Cairo* is the Westernized version of al-Qahirah. The Fatimids expanded the city and built the mosque* and university called al-Azhar, one of the greatest centers of learning in the medieval world. The university still exists today. Al-Fustat remained the region's commercial center for nearly 200 years. In 1168, however, it was burned by the Muslims to keep it from falling into the hands of Christian invaders. The Muslim leader, Saladin, went on to establish a large empire with Cairo as its capital.

* **mosque** Muslim place of worship

During the Middle Ages, Cairo occupied an important place in the spice trade between Europe and Asia. By the 1340s its population had reached half a million. But beginning with an outbreak of the Black Death in 1348, Cairo was struck by a series of plagues and other misfortunes. A sea voyage that occurred just before 1500 changed the country's fortunes. The Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama reached Asia by sailing around the southern tip of Africa, opening a new route to the countries that grew spices and eliminating Cairo's key role in that trade. Then, after the Turks conquered Egypt in 1517, Cairo lost its place as the



Islam has been a large part of the culture of Cairo since the 600s. Minarets rising from the city's many mosques dot the skyline.

capital of a major empire. The city fell into decline. By 1800 its population had shrunk by nearly half.

In the mid-1800s the construction of the nearby SUEZ CANAL and a railroad between Cairo and ALEXANDRIA brought immigration and new growth to Cairo. After 1850 the city developed along European lines inspired by improvements made in Paris. Large boulevards were added to handle motorized vehicle traffic, new bridges were built, and utilities such as gas, electricity, water, and telephone were provided. New public transportation services enabled suburbs to multiply outside Cairo, and by the end of World War II the city was home to more than 2 million people. Since then, Cairo has grown enormously, with new suburbs spilling out into the surrounding desert and Nile delta.

Modern Cairo. Today Cairo's population approaches 12 million people, which means that about one in every five Egyptians lives in the city. Cairo's rapid growth, however, has caused serious problems of pollution and unemployment in the area. Although predominantly Muslim, the

city contains the largest concentration of Coptic Christians in the world.

See color plate 14, vol. 4.

Cairo is the center of Egyptian government, industry, finance, and culture. It contains most of Egypt's banks and businesses and a good part of its recreational and entertainment facilities. Cairo's lively film and music industry attracts the most popular entertainers of the Arab world. The city also offers more than 20 museums, various performing arts organizations, and several noted universities that draw students from many Arab nations. (*See also* **Cities and Urbanization, Copts**.)

Calendars and Time

In African cities, many people use the Western system of clocks and calendars for official and business purposes. They divide the day into 24 hours and the year into 12 months based on the earth's movement around the sun. As in the West, a general system of dating is used to create a common framework for past events from many locations.

Traditionally, however, African societies have not used formal, structured methods to measure, count, or keep track of hours and months. Instead, they marked time by the rhythms of daily life and by the events of a community's or people's shared history. This approach still shapes the idea of time in rural and traditional African cultures.

Months, Seasons, and Years. People in North Africa, where Islam is the dominant religion, use the Muslim calendar, which has 12 months in a year. Unlike the Western calendar, however, Muslim months are based on the 29.5-day cycle of the moon's phases. Each month begins on or near the date of the new moon and contains either 29 or 30 days.

The Muslim year has a total of either 354 or 355 days—10 or 11 days shorter than the Western year, which is based on the solar cycle. This difference means that the Muslim months do not occur in the same season every year. Over a period of 32.5 Western years, each Muslim month moves through the cycle of seasons.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

In sub-Saharan* Africa, some groups do not identify and name months. People in these cultures are aware of the phases of the moon and the yearly cycle of seasons. But instead of using a calendar to schedule their work, they carry out their activities—hunting, farming, rituals*—in accordance with regular events they observe in nature. Such events include the positions of the stars and the sun, the flowering of plants, the rise and fall of rivers, and seasonal changes in temperature, rainfall, and wind.

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Other indigenous* groups—especially those centered on agriculture—do have systems of named months, with calendars based on the lunar cycle. Like the months of the Muslim calendar, the months of a traditional African lunar calendar do not occur in the same season each year. For this reason, the timing of agricultural activities cannot be based on a lunar calendar. Even in calendar-keeping societies, farming is thought of not in terms of months or dates but as a succession of

tasks, such as tilling, planting, weeding, scaring away birds, and harvesting. Each task is performed when certain conditions occur.

A few groups correct the imbalance between the lunar calendar and the solar cycle by adding an extra month to the calendar or by repeating a month when the calendar falls significantly out of line with the solar year. In most cases, however, traditional African calendars are used mainly for timing social and ritual activities. Even when a calendar of months exists, the year does not necessarily begin in one specific month. A group may observe separate agricultural, ritual, and legal years that begin in different months. The year usually starts in whatever season is most important to a particular society, such as the rainy season.

The people of sub-Saharan Africa did not develop systems of dates applied across large areas and based on historical events. However, some states in West Africa and East Africa have maintained royal genealogies, or lists of their kings. Scholars and historians once believed that such lists provided an accurate chronology* for these societies. But in recent times, they have realized that many factors make the king lists inaccurate. The list-makers sometimes added early names to make their societies appear more ancient. They also dropped the names of rulers who were later overthrown or adjusted the lists to support the current ruler's claim to the throne. Though valuable as cultural documents, king lists are not reliable as chronologies.

* **chronology** order of events

Hours and Days. Some traditional African societies divide each month into halves—before and after the full moon—and count days within each half. More important than the counting of days, however, is organizing them into weeks. Most groups define a week according to the cycle of local market days. The week is as long as the interval between the beginning of one market cycle and the next, usually around five days.

The African day begins at dawn or sunrise, not in the middle of the night as in the Western system. Indigenous groups do not divide the day into fixed hours, minutes, or seconds. Instead, they organize the day by the changing position of the sun and the social activities associated with it. A typical daily sequence might be: first light, sunrise, breakfast, going to the fields, noon, cattle returning, sunset, supper, and sleep, followed again by first light. The night is not usually subdivided into any periods, and a 24-hour period may be called a "day," a "night," or a "sleep."

Camara Laye

1928–1980
Guinean author

Camara Laye is one of Africa's best-known and most respected francophone (French-speaking) authors. His first novel, *L'enfant noir (The Black Infant)* is also one of his most popular. Written in 1953, the book tells of Camara's childhood in the town of Kouroussa, Guinea. On the one hand, it is a personal account of the author's Mande culture, including a description of secret initiation rites. On the other, it is the story of an African exiled to France who remembers the culture he was forced to abandon.

Dramouss, another work based on Camara's personal experiences, is about his disappointment with the political regime of President Sékou Touré. The Guinean ruler's cruelty forced Camara into exile in Senegal. Camara's last book, *Le mâitre de la parole,* is a retelling of the Mande epic* about the medieval* Emperor Sunjata. Camara wrote down and translated the tale from the performance of a traditional storyteller.

Another novel that appeared under Camara's name was *Le regard du roi (The Radiance of the King).* Some people doubted that Camara was actually the author of the book, and shortly before his death he confirmed that the novel was written by someone else. Camara Laye died in Senegal in 1980. (*See also* **Literature**.)

* **epic** long poem about legendary or historic heroes, written in a grand style

* **medieval** referring to the Middle Ages in western Europe, generally considered to be from the A.D. 500s to the 1500s

Cameroon

The West African country of Cameroon extends from the shores of the Atlantic Ocean to Lake Chad in the interior. As one of the most culturally diverse nations in Africa, Cameroon includes hundreds of different ethnic groups. Long a crossroads for merchants from the Middle East and Europe, it was controlled by various European powers before gaining independence in the 1960s.

GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMY

Cameroon's Atlantic coast is swampy and densely forested. Mount Cameroon, an active volcano and the highest peak in western Africa, towers above the rest of the coastline. Farther inland, the country divides into two main regions: the western highlands and the southern plateau.

Landforms. The mountains of Cameroon's western highlands serve as a natural boundary with Nigeria. The mountains contain various mineral deposits and are covered with rich volcanic soil. The western highlands merge into the southern plateau, also known as the Bamileke Grassfields. This area of gently rolling hills stretches eastward into the Central African Republic. Cameroon's capital city, Yaoundé, is located in the center of the southern region.

Northern Cameroon features the Benue Depression, a low-lying district around the Kebi River valley that is enclosed on three sides by mountains. Beyond the mountains the Chad Plain gradually slopes down to the shores of Lake Chad. Cameroon's many rivers, noted for their rapids and waterfalls, are used for transportation and the production of hydroelectric power.

Climate and Vegetation. Cameroon's climate and vegetation vary with the terrain. Southern Cameroon has a warm and rainy equatorial* climate. Mangrove* swamps along the southern coast eventually give way to thick rain forests, particularly in the southeast.

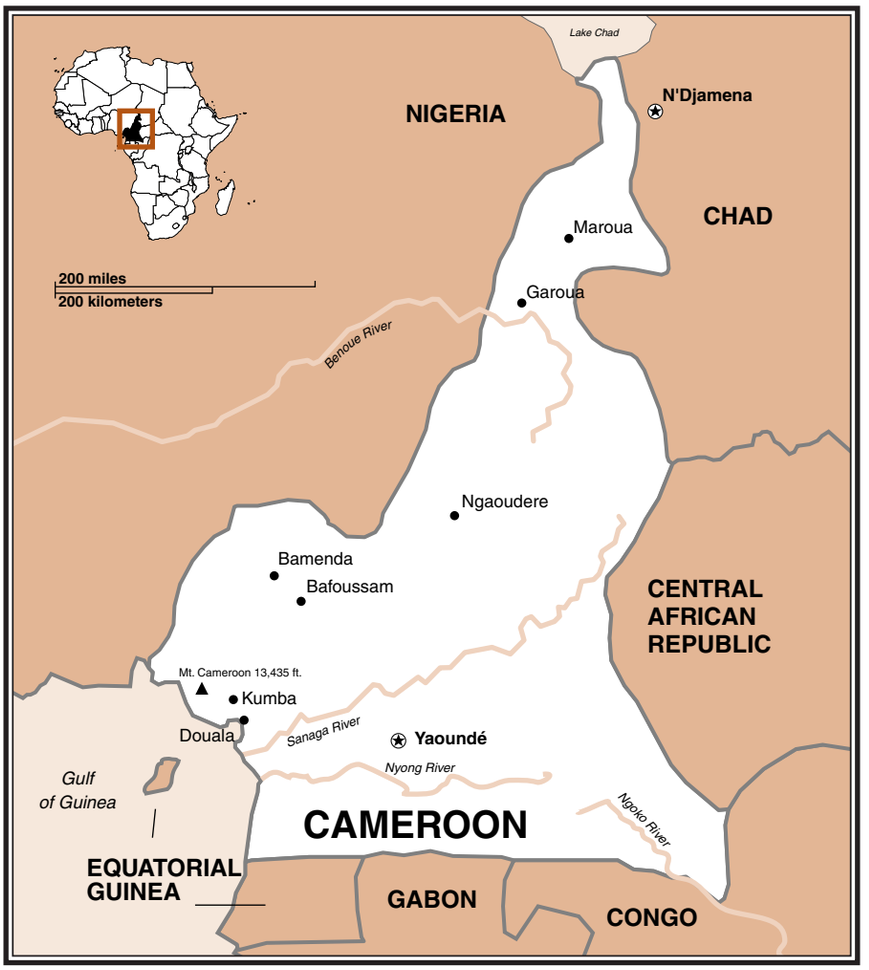
The coast has a wet season that runs from May through October, followed by a dry season from November to April. The coast receives more rainfall than the interior, where the rainy season lasts only two or three months. Farther north the climate is hotter and drier, and the vegetation changes from rain forest to wooded grasslands. The far north experiences desertlike conditions. Grass and shrubs grow during the wet season, but the region has little vegetation during the rest of the year.

* **equatorial** referring to the region around the equator

* **mangrove** tree found in coastal areas that grows in dense clusters

Two Traditions

The colonial powers of France and Britain left widely different legacies in Cameroon—in such areas as language, educational institutions, and political systems. When Cameroon achieved independence, these different traditions became the source of conflict. In an effort to smooth out some of the differences between English- and French-speakers, Cameroon declared itself bilingual, making both languages official. In 1984, to symbolize the unity of the country, its name was changed from the Federal Republic of Cameroon—suggesting a federation of separate parts—to the Republic of Cameroon.



Economy. Cameroon's strong agricultural base produces enough food for its growing population as well as a surplus for export. The main agricultural exports are cocoa, coffee, and timber. Cameroonian industries produce both oil and tin, and the country also contains deposits of uranium and iron ore. In addition, the peoples of the southern plateau produce items such as wood carvings for sale to outside markets.

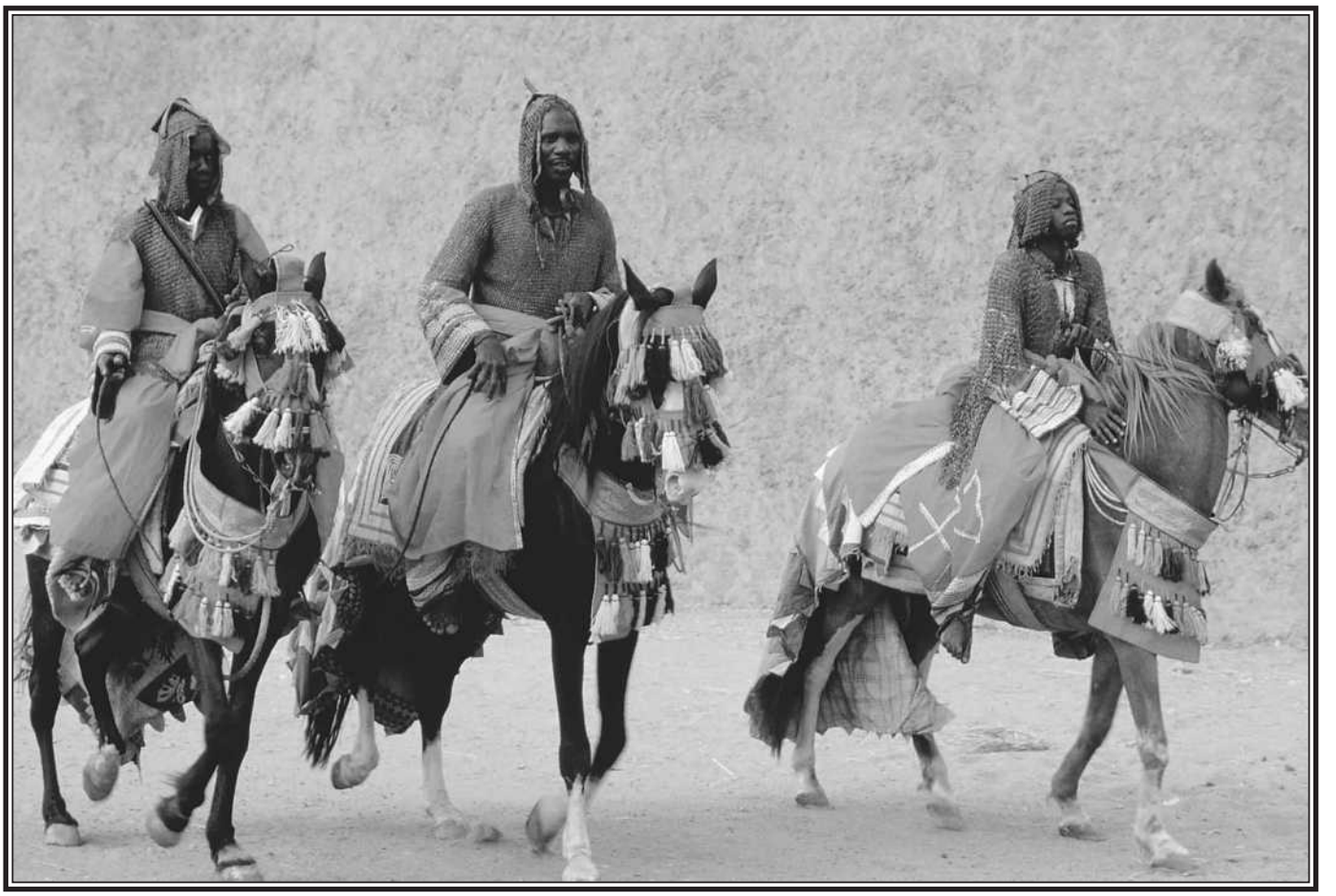
The transportation infrastructure* is relatively well developed, with good roads connecting most towns and cities to the surrounding areas. These roads allow many people of the densely populated southern plateau to leave the area to work and send money home to family members. However, despite its natural resources, Cameroon's economy was in crisis in the 1990s due to political instability and poor investment of the profits from agriculture and industry.

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

Several powerful kingdoms existed in Cameroon before the arrival of Europeans in the late 1400s. During the colonial era, which began in the late 1800s, the region was controlled by three different European powers: Germany, Britain, and France. Modern Cameroon reflects the legacy of these various political influences.

See map in Archaeology and Prehistory (vol. 1).



Northern Cameroon has long been a stronghold of Fulani culture. These Fulani riders and their festively decorated horses parade through the northern town of Rey Bouba.

Precolonial and Colonial History. People of Cameroon's early societies crossed the Sahara desert to trade with Egypt and other civilizations along the Mediterranean Sea. Gradually, separate kingdoms arose around Lake Chad and in the eastern grasslands. Trade, migration, and expansion brought the kingdoms of the region into contact with one another. In the 1400s the Bamileke and Bamum kingdoms joined together to form a confederation. Another early kingdom, Mandara, was conquered by the BORNU empire in the 1500s.

Many of the first Europeans in Cameroon were merchants. They began exporting ivory and slaves from the area. By the late 1800s several European powers had set their sights on Cameroon. In 1884 the Germans established the Kamerun Protectorate in the region, but during World War I the British and French took over the colony. After the war, Britain and France divided the colony and ruled it under the supervision of the League of Nations, an organization formed to promote international security.

Britain controlled the northwestern portion of the country, known as British Cameroons and incorporated it into the colony of Nigeria. However, Britain did little to develop the area. In fact, British rule is seen as a time of neglect, and many Cameroonians were angry with both the British colonial leaders and the Nigerians. France invested much more



Republic of Cameroon

POPULATION:
15,421,937 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:
183,568 sq. mi. (475,400 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:
French, English (official); Bantu dialects (24)

NATIONAL CURRENCY:
CFA franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:
Traditional 51%, Christian 33%, Muslim 16%

CITIES:
Yaoundé (capital) 1,119,000 (1999 est.); Douala, Nkongsamba, Maroua, Bafoussam, Foumban, Garoua, Limbe, Bamenda, Kumba

ANNUAL RAINFALL:
Varies by region from 23 in. (600 mm) in the extreme north to 390 in. (10,000 mm) along the coast

ECONOMY:
GDP per capita: U.S. $2,000

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:
Agricultural: coffee, cocoa, cotton, rubber, bananas, livestock, timber
Manufacturing: textiles, lumber, food and beverage processing
Mining: petroleum, bauxite, iron ore

GOVERNMENT:
German colony until 1916, then divided by League of Nations between France and England. In 1960 French portion declared independence. In 1961 English portion voted to split, with part joining Nigeria, remainder joining Cameroon. Multiparty democracy; president and AssemblÉe Nationale elected by universal suffrage.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:
1960–1982 President Ahmadou Ahidjo
1982– President Paul Biya

ARMED FORCES:
13,100 (1998 est.)

EDUCATION:
Compulsory for ages 6–11; literacy rate 63%

time and money in French Cameroun, and a large number of French citizens settled there. By the time of independence, this part of the country was wealthier, more educated, and had a much stronger infrastructure than the British section.

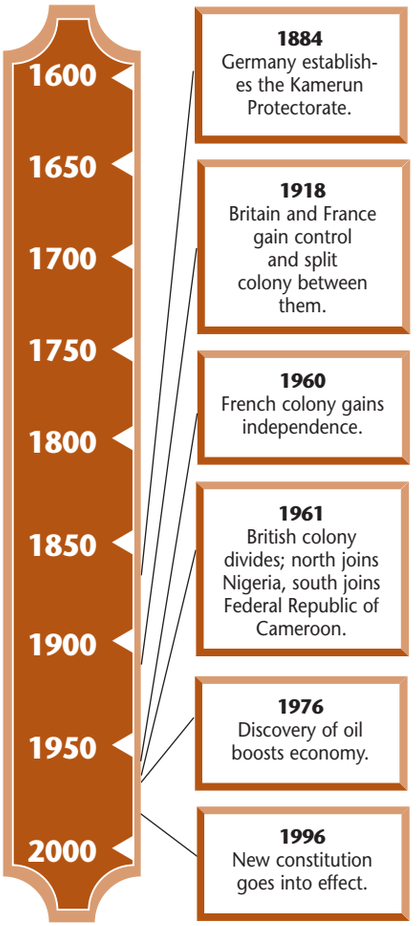
In 1958 pressure for greater political freedom caused France to declare Cameroun a republic with limited self-government. Two years later the republic became independent. In 1961 the northern section of British Cameroons voted to join Nigeria; the southern section became part of the Federal Republic of Cameroon.

From Colony to Dictatorship. The first president of the new republic, Ahmadou Ahidjo, promised to maintain close relations with France and to build an economy based on capitalism*. One of Ahidjo's main goals was to unite the English- and French-speaking parts of the country. He hoped to get Cameroonians to identify with the nation rather than their own ethnic groups. To achieve his goals, Ahidjo combined the nation's political parties into a single party, the Cameroon National Union (CNU). The president ruled as an absolute dictator, with power concentrated in his hands and exercised through the CNU.

* **capitalism** economic system in which businesses are privately owned and operated and where free markets coordinate most economic activity

Problems soon arose in stabilizing the country's economy. During the early years of independence, Cameroon was heavily dependent on foreign trade and produced few goods for its own population. With the discovery of oil in 1976, petroleum became Cameroon's main source of income. However, much of this money was spent on poorly planned projects.

In 1982 Ahidjo resigned and his prime minister, Paul Biya, took over the presidency. However, Ahidjo tried to maintain control of the gov-



* **authoritarian** relating to strong leadership with unquestioned powers

ernment from behind the scenes, and this led to a confrontation between the two men. Forces loyal to Ahidjo staged an uprising in 1984, but Biya defeated them and exiled Ahidjo. Up to this time Biya had been trying to make the country more democratic, but the uprising caused him to adopt more authoritarian* measures.

The people of Cameroon, who wanted more political freedom, opposed Biya's policies. They pressed the government for democratic reforms and staged demonstrations in 1990. New political parties emerged and multiparty elections were held in 1992. Still, Biya and his party managed to maintain their majority. Biya then arrested the leader of the main opposition party, leading to clashes between the government and its opponents. A new constitution, drafted the following year, gave the president and the central government very strong powers. Although parliamentary elections were held again in 1997, Biya's party was able to control the process under the new constitution. Many observers considered the elections unfair.

Government. The president of Cameroon is elected directly by the people for a seven-year term and may serve a maximum of two terms. The president appoints the prime minister, the official head of the government. The legislature consists of the Assemblée Nationale, whose members are directly elected, and the Senate. The people elect regional and local councils, but the president may suspend or dissolve these councils. In general, the president holds enormous political power and progress toward democracy has been slow.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

Cameroon is home to over 250 ethnic groups and more than 300 different languages. The ethnic groups correspond to the various geographical regions of the country. The southern coast and inland forests are inhabited by a wide variety of agricultural and fishing societies as well as nomadic Pygmy groups. Most people in the inland forests live in small villages headed by a chief or a council of elders. Christianity and formal education are more widespread near the coast, where contact with Europeans occurred earlier than in the inland villages.

The Bamileke, a group of tightly organized chiefdoms, live in Cameroon's grassy plateaus. These communities vary in size from a few people to tens of thousands. Although most of the Bamileke practice Christianity, the ruling families of one group, the Bamum, converted to Islam in the 1800s.

Northern Cameroon has been heavily influenced by a Muslim people known as the FULANI. Several dozen Fulani states were established in northern Cameroon during the 1800s and absorbed much of the non-Muslim population. As a result, Islam is widespread in the region. With the migration of many rural people to the cities of northern Cameroon, the influence of Fulani culture has continued to spread. (*See also* **Climate, Colonialism in Africa, Islam in Africa, Pygmies, Slave Trade**.)

Canary Islands

The Canaries are a group of seven volcanic islands that lie off the northwestern coast of Africa. The westernmost islands are actually the peaks of mountains that rise from the ocean floor to heights several thousand feet above sea level. The eastern Canaries are much flatter. Gran Canaria and Tenerife are the two most important islands.

The Canaries have a fairly consistent subtropical climate year-round with temperatures ranging between 64°F and 79°F and little rainfall. Vegetation varies by altitude. Plants suited to hot, dry conditions grow at lower elevations, while fruits and vegetables are raised at elevations above about 1,400 feet. Bananas are the most important export crop, along with potatoes, tomatoes, oranges, and grapes. Since the 1960s, however, tourism has been the mainstay of the economy, and some 80 percent of the island's inhabitants are connected in some way with the tourism. Aside from a large petroleum refinery in Santa Cruz that processes crude oil, there is little industry on the islands.

The Canaries were originally inhabited by a North African Berber people known as the Guanche. The king of MAURITANIA visited the islands in about 40 B.C., a journey that was noted by the ancient Romans. The name of the islands probably comes from the Latin word *canis,* meaning dog, because of the many large dogs found there. European sailors first arrived in the 1200s, and Spanish settlers took over the islands during the 1400s. For hundreds of years the Canaries served as an important port on Spain's transatlantic route to the Americas. Christopher Columbus stopped in the islands for supplies on each of his westward voyages across the Atlantic.

The Canaries were a Spanish province until 1927, when rivalry between the main islands of Gran Canaria and Tenerife caused Spain to split them into two separate provinces. In 1982 the entire island group became a self-governing community, electing its own representatives to the Spanish parliament and senate. Most of the islands' approximately 1.5 million inhabitants are descended from the original inhabitants and the Spanish conquerors. The two major cities are Las Palmas and Santa Cruz. Canarians speak Spanish and the local culture is largely Catholic. (*See also* **Colonialism in Africa**.)

Cape Coloured People

Cape Coloured People are the mixed race population of various towns in Cape Province, SOUTH AFRICA. They are descendants of Dutch, British, and Kxoe people (various non–Bantu-speaking groups of southern Africa), as well as of slaves brought from MADAGASCAR and East Asia. Until the late 1950s, when apartheid* policies were adopted in South Africa, most of the Cape Coloured lived in cities such as CAPE TOWN or Port Elizabeth. During the 1970s, they were sent to undeveloped areas outside the towns and their homes were given to white families.

Most of their 2 million members belong to Dutch Protestant churches, but a small minority is Muslim. The Cape Coloured People speak a form of Dutch called Afrikaans, but they maintain a cultural identity separate from both whites and blacks. Politically, they have tended to support the white-led National Party rather than the black-led African National Congress. (*See also* **Apartheid**.)

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation in South Africa intended to maintain white control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

Cape Town

Located about 30 miles north of the Cape of Good Hope, Cape Town is the oldest city in SOUTH AFRICA. With its many gardens, parks, beaches, historical buildings, and mountains, it is considered one of the most beautiful cities in the world.

Cape Town (known as Kaapstad in Afrikaans) was founded in 1652 as a supply station for Dutch ships sailing between Europe and Asia. The Dutch brought in slaves from Asia and MADAGASCAR. French and Dutch colonists settled there later. The British took the city in 1806 and abolished slavery, causing many Dutch settlers to leave Cape Town. These settlers trekked north in the 1830s and eventually founded the AFRIKANER REPUBLICS.

See color plate 15, vol. 4.

In the late 1800s the discovery of diamonds and gold in the northern Transvaal led to the founding of JOHANNESBURG. The new town soon replaced Cape Town as the leading city in southern Africa. However, Cape Town remained the region's principal port until the 1980s. It still boasts one of the world's largest dry docks and offers offshore services for large tankers.

Cape Town has long been known for its diverse ethnic population. Before South Africa introduced its policy of APARTHEID in 1948, the city was largely integrated. Afterwards, thousands of CAPE COLOURED PEOPLE—mixed-race descendants of European,

KHOISAN, and Asian ancestors—were expelled from Cape Town and forced to settle in undeveloped areas outside the city. As a result, many thousands of black people from elsewhere in South Africa were brought in to replace them as laborers. One of the worst of these areas, Crossroads, grew to a shantytown* of 70,000 people. Since the end of apartheid in the 1990s, Cape Town has once again became an extremely diverse city. (*See also* **Colonialism in Africa**.)

* **shantytown** poor, run-down section of a city, often inhabited by immigrants

Cape Verde

The nation of Cape Verde (also known as Cabo Verde) consists of 15 islands about 400 miles off the coast of SENEGAL. Although the name means "Green Cape," the islands actually have a hot, dry climate and very little arable* land. The capital city of Praia is on the island of Santiago

* **arable** suitable for producing crops

Before its discovery by the Portuguese in 1460, Cape Verde was uninhabited. Portugal used the islands as a supply base for slave ships making the voyage from Africa to America. The islands eventually became home to descendants of African slaves and European settlers from Portugal and the Mediterranean. The Portuguese often chose Cape Verdeans to administer their other African colonies; many served overseas.

During the late 1950s, Cape Verde joined GUINEA-BISSAU in seeking independence from Portugal. By 1975 both colonies had won their independence, and for the next five years one political party, the PAIGC, governed both countries. Aristides Pereira became the first president of Cape Verde. The nation planned to unite with Guinea-Bissau, but a 1980 coup* in Guinea-Bissau altered the course of events. The

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

Cape Verde PAIGC changed its name to the PAICV and declared itself the country's only legal party.

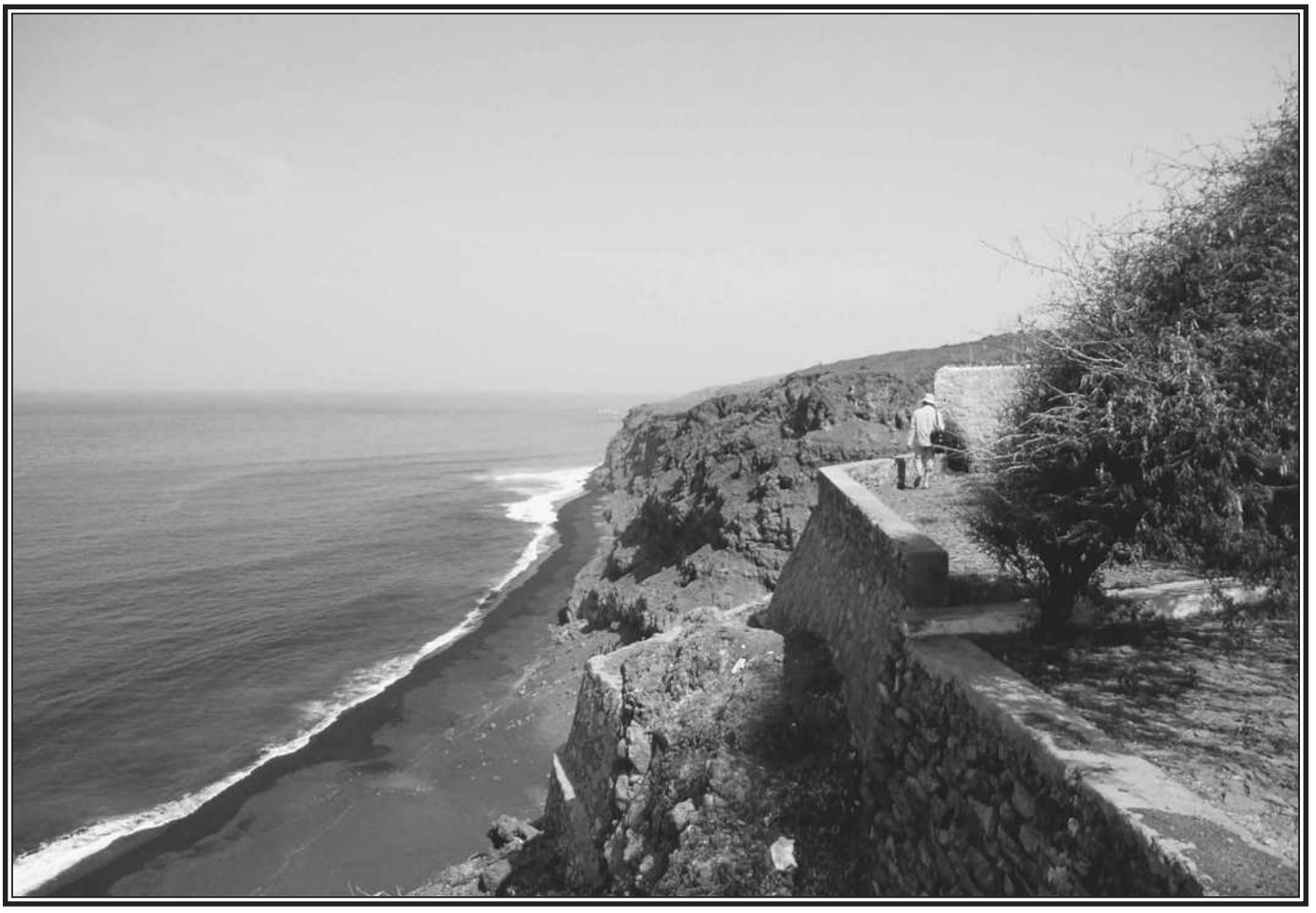
Cape Verde's government has been remarkably stable since independence, with only a single unsuccessful coup attempt in 1977. In 1990 opposition political groups formed the Movement for Democracy (MPD) and pressured the government to end single-party rule. Multiparty elections were held in 1991, and António Mascarenhas Monteiro of the MPD was elected president.

The population of Cape Verde, about 400,000, is ethnically homogenous*. Almost all the people are Catholic and speak Crioulu, a Portuguese-African language. In culture, Cape Verdeans are closer to the Portuguese than to West Africans.

* **homogenous** similar in nature

With little rainfall, the islands produce only enough food to supply about 10 percent of the needs of the people. Drought and famine are common occurrences. Nevertheless, the majority of the people work in agriculture. Much of the land is held by landlords who hire laborers to work their fields. Most farms are very small, typically less than three acres in size.

For many years, a large number of men have emigrated to find work overseas. Many have worked in the cod fishing industry in the north



Cape Verde contains ruins of many Portuguese forts, like this one on the island of São Vicente. The Portuguese held Cape Verde for more than 500 years and had a lasting influence on the islands' culture.

Atlantic ocean and have settled in southeastern New England. In fact, twice as many Cape Verdeans live outside the country as live on the islands. These emigrants send millions of dollars home each year, contributing a large percentage of the country's foreign earnings. Because so many men have left the islands, the adult population is about 55 percent female, and women head almost 40 percent of all households. (*See also* **Colonialism in Africa, Slave Trade**.)

CARNIVALS

See *Festivals and Carnivals*.

Carthage

Carthage, a rich and powerful city of the ancient world, once dominated the coast of North Africa. It stood on a peninsula in what is now TUNISIA, with a good harbor on each side. At one time the city controlled an empire that included North Africa, southern Spain, the Mediterranean islands of Sardinia and Corsica, and part of Sicily.

The Phoenicians, a trading and seafaring people of the eastern Mediterranean, founded Carthage sometime before 814 B.C. The city grew wealthy as a result of mining silver in North Africa and Spain. After gaining independence from Phoenicia around 600 B.C., Carthage had several conflicts with the Greeks and then began enlarging its territory about 410 B.C. At the time Rome was a rising power, and the Carthaginians and Romans eventually clashed over control of Sicily. Between 264 and 146 B.C. the two powers engaged in a series of struggles that the Romans called the Punic (meaning Phoenician) Wars. Rome finally defeated Carthage and burned it to the ground.

Roman rulers later sent its citizens to colonize Carthage, and for several centuries after 29 B.C. the rebuilt city was a major center of Roman administration in North Africa. About A.D. 700, Carthage was captured by the Arabs as part of their conquest of North Africa. Many Roman structures were destroyed, and the city was absorbed into the Arab town of Tunis. (*See also* **North Africa: History and Cultures**.)

CATHOLICISM

See *Christianity in Africa*.

Central African Federation

The Central African Federation was created in 1953 by the union of the British colonies of Northern and Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Politicians had two reasons for forming this federation. One was to gain access to the copper mines of Northern Rhodesia and the cheap labor of Nyasaland. The other was to calm the fears of white settlers who were concerned about losing their grip on power over the region.

Central African Republic

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

Located in a broad, rolling plateau just north of the equator, the Central African Republic varies from tropical rain forest in the southwest to savanna* woodlands in the northeast. Although most of the country receives abundant rainfall, the extreme—and very dry—northeast receives only about 0.2 inches annually. The Oubangui River, the most important waterway, runs past Bangui, the capital, and along the nation's southern border.

ECONOMY

The Central African Republic contains immense natural resources that could easily make it one of the richest countries in Africa. These resources include fertile land, plentiful wildlife and timber, and exten-

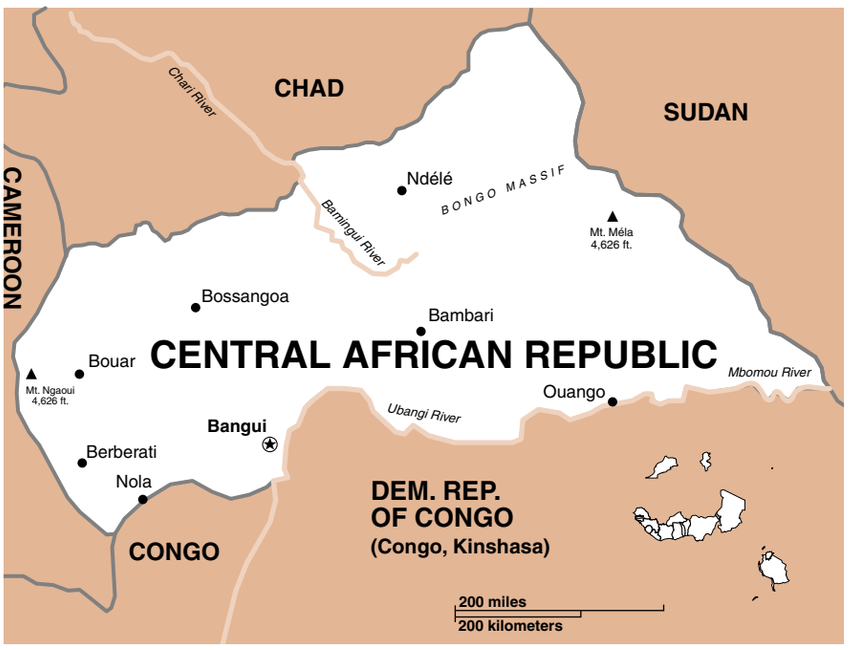




Plate 10: Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya led his country to independence and became its first president in 1964. He is shown in 1977 at one of his last public appearances. He died the following year.



Plate 11: In 1993 F. W. de Klerk, the president of South Africa, and Nelson Mandela, the leader of the African National Congress, received the Nobel Peace Prize for working together to end the system of racial segregation in South Africa. The following year brought free elections in which all races could vote. Mandela became the nation's first black president.

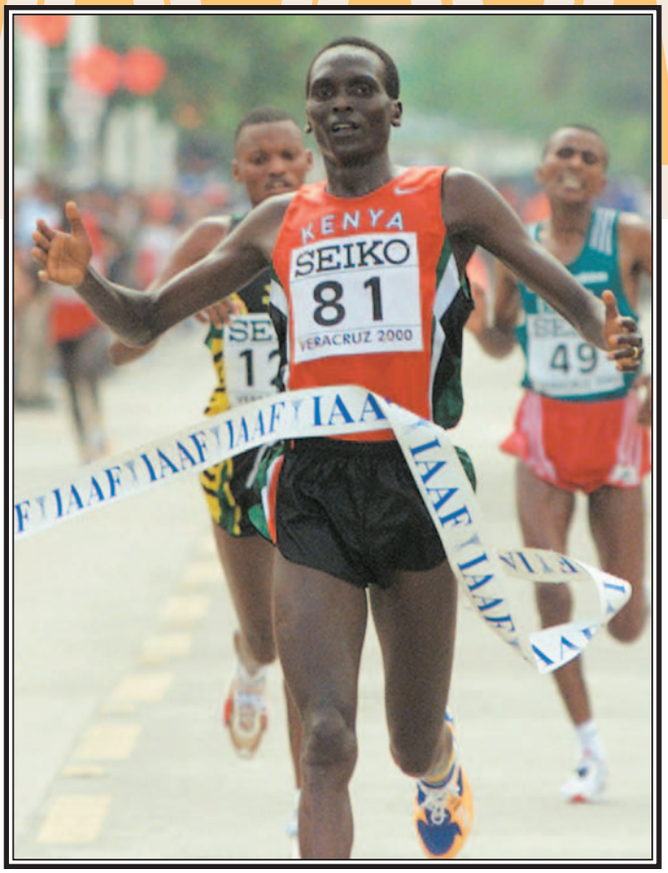


Plate 12: African athletes have excelled in international competitions. Runner Paul Tergat of Kenya is shown arriving first at the finish line of a half-marathon in Mexico.



Plate 13: Rwanda has been torn by conflict between the Hutu and Tutsi people since 1959. During this time, millions of Rwandans have fled to neighboring countries. Here Rwandan refugees cross the Kagera River, seeking safety in Tanzania.



Plate 14: During the holy month of Ramadan, Muslims fast during daylight hours and eat after sundown and just before dawn. In Cairo a man prepares sweets traditionally eaten at the early meal.

Plate 15: The Sakalava, a large ethnic group in Madagascar, live on the western coast of the island. They have a long history as seafarers, trading food, spices, and slaves in the Persian Gulf, Asia, and the Americas. The Sakalava wear distinctive clothing, such as the colorful waist wraps seen here.



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